

# GLIMPSES INTO THE CORRIDORS OF POWER



GOHAR AYUB KHAN

OXFORD



## **About the Author**

Gohar Ayub Khan, the son of Pakistan's first military ruler, Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan, graduated from the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, UK and attained the rank of captain in the Pakistan army before resigning in 1962.

Taking up a political career in 1964 as a member of the Muslim League, he was elected six times to the National Assembly, representing his home constituency of Haripur, NWFP. From 1990–1993 he was Speaker of the National Assembly, and following his party's defeat in the 1993 elections, became Deputy Leader of the Opposition. In November 1997, after the Muslim League's election victory, he was appointed Foreign Minister in Nawaz Sharif's cabinet but requested a change of portfolio, becoming Federal Minister for Water and Power in August 1998 until General Pervez Musharraf took control of the government in a bloodless coup in October 1999.

Gohar Ayub Khan is currently Senior Vice President of the Pakistan Muslim League (Q).

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GOHAR AYUB KHAN



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**মুক্তিযুদ্ধ ই-আর্কাইভ ট্রাস্ট**

**Liberation War eArchive Trust**

**মুক্তিযুদ্ধের ইতিহাস হোক উনুত**

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## PREFACE

IT WAS A DIFFICULT decision to finally sit down and write my memoirs. My wife, Zeb, had been persuading me for some time to write them, and, if I chose not to have them published, to leave the manuscript for the family. It was only recently that I started working on these memoirs in earnest, and subsequently decided to have them published as well. I fully realize that some of the personalities mentioned are alive and have held important positions in government and the armed forces. There is regard and respect for all mentioned and no malice is intended towards anyone.

What has been narrated has either been told to me by my father or has been seen, heard or experienced by me. I started keeping notes of important events since I was elected the Speaker of the National Assembly, but the earlier period is all narrated from memory. I owe much thanks to Mr Haji Hattar, the librarian at the National Assembly, who dug up information for me at such short notice.

Starting my career as an army officer enabled me to get an insight of the army, navy, and the air force. Though I resigned my commission in March 1962, my contact with my own battalion, the 'Sher-Dils', and the Punjab Regiment, continued. Being an ADC to Father brought me into contact with senior officers and politicians at a personal level. In Karachi, contacts with the leading business and industrial personalities made me understand the contributions they made to the country under difficult conditions. Though I had been elected member of the National Assembly in 1965 my active participation in politics began only after my father's death in 1974.

Much has happened over the years; I can surely say as much for the years that comprise my lifetime. In what follows, I shall

only be able to provide you with glimpses of what has transpired in the history of Pakistan, in my personal life, and in the corridors of power.

PART ONE  
EARLY GLIMPSES

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# 1

## ROOTS

A SHORT DISTANCE from the town of Haripur in the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan, is my birthplace, Rehana. It sits picturesquely in the rolling green fields of the Hazara valley, near the verdant hill country that rapidly rises into the majestic, snow-clad peaks of the western Himalayas. Fifteen miles to the north-west of Rehana, the mighty River Indus forms the natural boundary of the district with its torrents freshly emerging from the high mountains. The Indus is known to the Pakhtuns as 'Abasin'—the Father of Rivers.

Rehana is an old Pakhtun village. The ethnic Pakhtuns originated in the highlands of what is now south-eastern Afghanistan, and were an integral part of the ancient kingdom of Ghandhara, a kingdom which at its pinnacle encompassed most of present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Pakhtuns slowly moved down into the plains and over the centuries populated southern Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan. Though mainly herdsmen, farmers and traders, the Pakhtuns also became known for their warrior traditions and prowess, having established kingdoms and empires across the breadth of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. In contemporary times, opportunities for enterprise have driven a large number of them to settle in all the major cities of Pakistan, and there are pockets of people of Pakhtun origin scattered across northern and southern India and in Bangladesh.

From the Western Afghans our forefather Tareen had three sons, Spin Tareen, Tor Tareen and Abdal. (The Abdal's name was changed to Durrani by Ahmad Shah Abdali). We are Tor

Tareen. My ancestor Sher Khan Tareen served as Governor of Qoshanj also Pushang (now Pishin in Balochistan) under Shah Abbas-I of Iran. Sher Khan had good relations with the Shah and prospered during Shah Abbas's reign. The death of Shah Abbas in 1629 led to a drastic change in Sher Khan's fortunes. The new Shah, Safi-I, did not treat him well. That led Sher Khan to take to raiding caravans and travellers when they passed close to Qoshanj. The Shah found Sher Khan's behaviour intolerable, and ordered his Governor, Ali Mardan Khan, in Kandahar to attack Qoshanj with a cavalry of one thousand soldiers in the year 1631. Seven years later the same Ali Mardan Khan surrendered Kandahar to Emperor Shah Jahan for three hundred thousand rupees. He was later appointed Governor of Kashmir.

Sher Khan Tareen was out raiding Sivi (now Sibi), when he received news that Ali Mardan Khan had captured Qoshanj and demolished his fort. Since it was futile for him to remain within the Shah's domain, he headed towards Multan, whose Governor, Ahmed Beg Khan, used his position of power to send Sher Khan on to Delhi. An entire audience was awaiting him when he arrived in Delhi. On 13 March 1632, he was received in person by Emperor Shah Jahan, who gave him two hundred thousand rupees in cash, permission to keep one thousand horses, and the tract of land in Hazara where my family still lives.

\* \* \* \*

The rise of the Sikhs in the late eighteenth century brought the Tareens into direct conflict with this new power. Inconclusive battles with Hari Singh Nalwa, the Sikh Governor of Hazara, and even a joint attack by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Hari Singh Nalwa, proved unsuccessful in dislodging the Tareens.

The death of Najeebullah Khan Tareen in 1799 left a vacuum in the leadership of the tribe. His wife, Bani Begum, assumed leadership of the tribe as her son Mohammad Khan was very young. In 1803, a Qazi who had been sent to collect revenues

from the Hazara valley was killed in a night attack led by Mukadam Musharraf, the retainer of Bani Begum.

In 1818, Makhan Singh—the Sikh Governor of Rawalpindi—invaded Hazara with five hundred cavalymen, and began pressuring Mohammad Khan Tareen—who had by then assumed leadership of the tribe—for revenue. Mohammad Khan responded by collecting a number of tribes to attack the Sikh Governor, and the latter was defeated and slain at Shah Mohammad. The Lahore Durbar then sent its forces to avenge the Sikh defeat. Under the leadership of Mohammad Khan Tareen, this force too was defeated at Nara, and Diwan Ram Dayal was slain.

In 1824, Ranjit Singh and Hari Singh Nalwa launched a joint attack on Nara to avenge their defeat at the hands of Mohammad Khan Tareen. Maharaja Ranjit Singh invited Mohammad Khan Tareen to Khabal (on the right bank of the Indus) for a truce, but there had been plans of treachery: at the banquet Mohammad Khan was arrested and taken to Lahore where he was bought for fifty-five thousand rupees by Hari Singh Nalwa. Hari Singh had Mohammad Khan thrown into a dried-up well where he died of slow starvation and poisoning. The sum of fifty-five thousand was recovered by Hari Singh by levying a tax of two-and-a-half rupees per house from every village in Hazara.

Struggles with the Sikhs continued. In 1825, Bostan Khan Tareen (a nephew of Mohammad Khan Tareen) was executed by being tied to the mouth of a cannon and blown up. On 7 March 1846, Ghulam Khan Tareen (son of Mohammad Khan Tareen) attacked the town of Haripur and set parts of it ablaze. He was later arrested by Major James Abbott, the Deputy Commissioner of Hazara, for allying himself with the Afghan prince, Ghulam Haider Khan, against the British. Ghulam Khan Tareen was sent to Allahabad jail, where he led a prison uprising in 1857. He was subsequently hanged for this act of rebellion.

The Rehana village was founded by Nadir Ali Khan Tareen. He moved there from his original village Darwesh (a village next



to Haripur), to be in a better position to look after his lands. The village is strategically located on a hill with terraced fields on all sides. That may be one of the reasons why Rehana was never attacked during the Sikh period.

\* \* \* \*

My great-grandfather, Khuda Dad Khan, and grandfather, Mir Dad Khan, were once visiting Nurpur for the annual *mela* when they came upon a British cavalry regiment carrying out their training routine. Being fond of horses, father and son stopped to watch. Noticing the interest shown by the young Mir Dad Khan, the commanding officer encouraged him to join the cavalry.

In 1880, Mir Dad Khan joined the Hodson's Horse Regiment. He rose to the rank of Risaldar Major, the highest rank an Indian could attain in the army at that time. Upon retiring, he handed over to Risaldar Major Mohammad Akram Khan, the father of late Lieutenant General Mohammad Azam Khan, a former Governor of East Pakistan.

Mir Dad Khan was greatly revered in his community and was often invited by the villagers to resolve their disputes. He would sit in his *hujra* for most of the day and often in the evenings as well, where people would come to see him. His hair was long, as was the custom, coming down to about an inch below the earlobe. Grandfather bred horses to sell to the army and for his own use. He had no formal education, as there were hardly any schools in that region during his youth. However, he did receive religious education in the village mosque and got the chance to study different disciplines while in the regiment. Despite being basically uneducated himself, Grandfather was fully aware of the importance of education. Eager to give his four sons a head-start, Grandfather made them attend a makeshift school at Koka (a nearby village) where in the summers classes were convened under a tree and in winter on a small hill. Father later attended the school in the Salam Khand village near Ghazi, where relatives

from his mother's side (the Tahir Khelis) lived. He then moved to the Darwesh village for some time, where he again stayed with his mother's family and then moved back to Rehana and matriculated from the Khalsa School, Haripur.

My father was the favourite child and Grandfather lovingly called him 'Papulus'. In keeping with family custom, Father's right earlobe was pierced and from it hung a thin, approximately inch-long earring, signifying his status as the first-born.

\* \* \* \*

For his higher education, Father went to Aligarh University where he became a member of the University Training Corps. He applied for a position in the army as soon as he became eligible. After clearing the initial interviews and the final examinations, he was selected to go to the Royal Military College in Sandhurst, UK, in 1926. (There were no military colleges in India at the time where cadets could be trained; as a result, ten young Indians would be selected every year to be sent to Sandhurst.) Those who were selected to go to Sandhurst had to bear all costs themselves. Grandfather could not come up with the twenty-five thousand rupees father needed to be able to go, so Grandfather, to fulfill his son's ambitions, sold some of his lands and property and came up with the money to cover Father's initial expenditures.

Sandhurst was a new beginning for Father. He did well in his courses and was the first Indian cadet to be promoted to Corporal and given two stripes. He later discovered that he was just an Honorary Corporal and not allowed to command any British cadets. The Indian cadets were discriminated against and taunted by the British cadets, which made them social outcasts and caused them to retreat into themselves. Father was spared this discrimination, thanks to his physique and fair complexion—in fact, he looked more British than the British!

Apart from the courses, Father actively pursued various sports, particularly horse riding and tennis. He also played the flute in Sandhurst's music club, and was even awarded a silver flute in recognition of his musical achievements. He continued to play the flute when he returned to Rehana, sitting atop a small hill overlooking the village—the hill where later my elder brother, Akhtar Ayub, built his house.

My grandfather was a deeply religious man. After retirement, he settled in Rehana and would go for *tahajjud* and *fajr* prayers to a *ziarat* a mile away, near the village of Phuttri. One morning, while returning from prayers, he collapsed on the way and had to be carried home. A dark patch developed in the middle of his left shoulder-blade. People took it to be an attack by a demon, but in fact he had had a severe heart-attack. He developed pneumonia soon afterwards, and died in September 1927.

Grandfather had left instructions that, in the event of his death, Father was not to be informed till he had finished his course at Sandhurst. In keeping with Grandfather's wishes, the family continued writing letters to Father as usual, keeping up the façade that Grandfather was alive and well. Three months later, when Father was on leave in Switzerland, he received a letter from his mother breaking the tragic news to him. On Father's return from Sandhurst, Grandfather's grave was opened to show him his father's remains for the last time. To everyone's amazement, the body was perfectly preserved.

\* \* \* \*

After receiving the King's Commission from Sandhurst, Father was sent on a year's secondment to the Royal Fusiliers, a British regiment stationed at Ambala.

An interesting incident occurred when Father was returning to Rehana on his first leave from the Royal Fusiliers. Riding from Rawalpindi to Rehana on his new American-made motorcycle, he slipped on a sharp bend near the Panian village and the

motorcycle fell on him. The villagers came running to the scene and, mistaking him for a Britisher (probably because he was wearing shorts), one of them said, 'Oh, let the Britisher die.' Only when Father cursed the villagers and told them that he was from Rehana did they help him up and apologize.

Father had been betrothed before he left for Sandhurst, but the marriage took place some years later. The reason for the delay was that Father had, after Grandfather's death, assumed the responsibilities of the head of the family, especially with respect to his younger siblings. Father had one half-brother, four real brothers, and two sisters. Two of Father's brothers, Sardar Bahadur Khan and Mohammad Iqbal Khan, were sent for training to the Sher-Dils as Y-Cadets. (By that time the Indian Military Academy had been established at Dehra Dun). Neither of the two were very keen to join the army, nor were they temperamentally suited for it. They were eventually sent home. Sardar Bahadur Khan was then sent to Aligarh where he studied law and eventually became a practicing lawyer in Abbottabad. He joined the Muslim League and contested elections to become the Speaker of the NWFP Assembly in 1943. He was the Chief Minister of NWFP for a short period and also the Minister of Communication in the federal government. He served as Agent to the Governor-General in Balochistan as well. Oddly enough, he was in the Council Muslim League—Father was President of the Convention Muslim League at the time—and he was also the leader of the opposition in the National Assembly in 1962 (when the Convention Muslim League was in government).

Mohammad Iqbal Khan did not study further after completing his matriculation. Instead, he joined the revenue department and became a *gardawar*. Later he was posted to Chilas, then Kabul, and finally to Peshawar where he served in the Intelligence Bureau.

My uncle Mohammad Akram Khan ran a cloth/general store in Haripur and Rehana. He became a member of the Khaksar movement and follower of its founder, Allama Mashriqi. He had

hoisted the Khaksar flag on his rooftop, wore the uniform and the arm-band, and for parades carried a sharp, shining spade with him as a weapon. Despite being such a true Khaksar, he worked very hard for my father's election when he ran for President and also helped me with all of my election campaigns.

Father's youngest brother, Sultan Ahmed Khan entered the Royal Indian Navy during the Second World War. He too joined the Council Muslim League. In 1962, he became a member of the West Pakistan Assembly as part of the opposition.

\* \* \* \*

In his early years in the army, Father did not have a settled family life as he was constantly on the move with his battalion. Accommodation for officers was not always available and living arrangements were, of course, temporary. Thus, Father decided to build a house in Rehana. He selected a small hill between Rehana and Phuttri for its construction, a location from where the view stretched uninterrupted for miles and miles, and one could see in the distance the towns of Taxila, Hasanabdal, Haripur and Abbottabad. Splendid as the location was, he was persuaded by relatives not to build the house there as it would be isolated from the villages and would need to be guarded all the time. Father then took half of the family *hujra* in Rehana and built a beautiful bungalow there. The eastern side of the bungalow was used as a *hujra* while the western side was used as the living quarters and the *zenana*. The bungalow was completed, and we moved into our home—well, myself not included; I still had a year to go before I moved into the world—in 1936.

# 2

## EARLY DAYS

FRIDAY, 8 JANUARY 1937. Inside a mud-walled room adjoining our new home, the village midwife helped me into the world. Mother had decided to give birth in that particular room because it could be adequately heated; the big rooms of the cemented, newly built bungalow were cold.

A red-velvet cap with golden piping was used to cover my head and ears. Felicitations poured in from relatives and others in the village. Mother—who was alone as Father was away on military duty with the Sher-Dils—named me Habibullah after an Afghan king. When Father returned, he suggested that my name be changed to Gohar. Despite the change of name, my mother continued to call me Gohar Habib for a further fifty years.

\* \* \* \*

When I was about one year old, the family moved to Bannu where the Sher-Dils were stationed at the time. We lived there for a year or two, and that is where my younger sister Naseem was born. We spent the summer months in Abbottabad, (my brother Shaukat was born there in 1940), and mid-December to mid-March were spent in Rehana to avoid the winters of Abbottabad.

At the start of the Second World War in 1939, the family moved back to Rehana. Father moved to New Delhi, where he was sent to raise a territorial battalion. He then went through the Staff College in Quetta and in 1942 he became Chief Instructor in the Officers' Training School in Bangalore.

The family moved to Bangalore to join Father. My elder brother, Akhtar, and I were put in a convent school. I took a great liking to my new school and to my studies, so much so that I would get to school very early in the morning and climb over the gate even before the watchman was awake.

As a Major in Bangalore, Father had two private cars. One was an old, black, open Ford, and the other a fairly new, light-green Plymouth. Petrol was rationed at the time, but it was also available on the black market in white tin cans. One day Akhtar and I—(Akhtar was eight and I five)—pushed the old Ford out of the garage into the shade of a large tamarind tree where there was a tap. Failing to differentiate between water and petrol, we started filling the tank of the Ford with water thinking we were doing a good deed, and stopped only when the fuel tank was full. Father was, of course, furious.

My mother, who had observed *purdah* in Rehana, suddenly found a new kind of freedom in this city so far from home. She began going to the cinema, where other officers and their wives would also be present, and started attending social events at the Officers' Training School.

In 1943, Father was posted to the Peshawar Brigade as Brigade Major. Before moving to Peshawar, the family went to Rehana for a few days. It was summer and we slept in a room where there was a large hand-pulled ceiling fan. When I saw my father doze off, I took his shotgun and a few cartridges and went out to shoot mountain pigeons. On my return, I found him waiting for me in the doorway of the bungalow. He did not have to ask me where I had been; the shotgun slung over my shoulder and the two pigeons in my hand left no need for explanation. He caught me by the scruff of the neck and pushed me to the ground to rub my nose in the dirt. I resisted him to the utmost, adjusting the palm of my hand on the ground such that my nose never had to touch the ground. Amused, Father laughed and let me go.

The brigade headquarters in Peshawar were located in the old building of a Durrani nobleman, Ali Mardan Khan, on Fort Road

in Peshawar. We lived quite close to the brigade headquarters, on 3 Michni Road. The Diwans, a Hindu family, lived next door. With just a hedge between us, the children of the two families constantly flitted between one house and the other, as if it were simply one big house.

On 8 January 1944, my mother gave birth to a set of twin boys, Tahir and Rashad. Three days later, Rashad—who had in fact been bigger and healthier than Tahir—suddenly died. My mother grieved for him till the very end of her life.

Two good friends of mine, Asif Nawaz and Nasir Nawaz, lived on 5 Michni Road. Our fathers were both from the Sher-Dils but their father, Captain Mohammad Zaman, had recently been transferred to the Signals. We went to the same school as well. The object of our envy at the time was a young British boy on roller-skates who would skate merrily up and down Michni Road after school hours.

The Second World War was underway, but the war was hardly felt by us youngsters. I remember the time that a six-engine British bomber came to Peshawar, and a large crowd—including me on my bicycle—had gone to the airfield to see it. It was all fun and games for us then.

\* \* \* \*

In March 1944, Akhtar and I were taken by bus from Abbottabad to Srinagar to join the convent school in Srinagar. The bus stopped at Domel for lunch at a restaurant which overlooked the Jhelum river. After lunch, I was sitting in the bus with my hand in the door frame when the bus-cleaner, not seeing my hand there, slammed the door shut and crushed my middle finger. The poor fellow got a good thrashing for it although he was not to blame. We arrived in Srinagar late in the evening and were taken to the school where my wounded finger was dressed by the nuns.



A few days later, Asif Nawaz, Nasir Nawaz, my cousin Humayun Rahman Khan, and the children of Mr Diwan, Arshad Farid and Inayatullah Khan, also joined the Presentation Convent. We all came to be known as the 'Khan Brothers'.

Among my friends at school (apart from the Khan Brothers) were Gurdip Singh, Androi Kapoor, and Parmeshwar Nath Sethi. In those days, people from different faiths had the chance to intermingle. All of us friends had many good times together and some rather funny incidents took place. For instance, Akhtar started teaching Gurdip and Parmeshwar the *kalima* and convinced them that if they recited the *kalima* they would be able to single-handedly fight Inayatullah, who was much bigger and heavier than them. Akhtar grabbed Gurdip and Parmeshwar by the neck, made them recite the *kalima*, and pushed them onto poor Inayatullah who, taken by surprise, fell to the ground. Gurdip and Parmeshwar were impressed by the power of the *kalima*. Gurdip was also made to jump from a six-foot wall while reciting the *kalima*—and when he landed unharmed, he was even more convinced of the powers of the *kalima*.

The nuns at the convent would always have their heads covered with a habit, and somehow the older girls convinced us that all of them had shaved heads. This had to be confirmed, we decided. There was a small conference, after which I was selected to stay awake after lights-out in the dormitory and carry out the secret mission.

There was always one nun who resided in the boys' dormitory, in a small cell which had curtains on two sides. It had been decided that when the nun returned to her cell at night, I would climb a bedside locker that was just outside her cell, and look over the curtain rod to investigate if she really did have a shaved head. As she entered her cell, I quietly climbed on to the table and peered into the cell. When she tilted her head upwards to remove the habit from her head, she saw me and froze. 'Gohar, get down and come here,' she said to me a few moments later. I wanted so much to disappear! I knew the inevitable was near

though, so I simply told her the reason why I had been trying to get a look at her. To my relief, she laughed, removed her habit and showed me her roughly-cut hair. So she didn't have a shaved head after all!

It was difficult—even for us, who were at the time so young and innocent—to remain untouched by the political tensions building around us in the subcontinent. One of the Muslim servants at school once told us how in the 1930s the troops of Maharaja Hari Singh Dogra had killed Muslims and thrown their bodies into the Jhelum river. Such tales drove fear into our hearts. Around that time, a Sikh official in charge of the Jammu and Kashmir state forests admitted his son as a day scholar in our school. We learnt that this boy's father had a number of hunting rifles. Wanting to reduce the ammunition in the possession of non-Muslims, Akhtar started buying the young boy munchies from the tuck-shop, and in return he was to bring him rifle bullets. The boy's father eventually noticed that some of his ammunition was missing. Under pressure from his father, the boy confessed all. They searched our dormitory lockers and found seven bullets from Akhtar—how horrific that was! The bullets were returned to their owner and the Sikh boy withdrawn from school. Looking back at the incident, I am surprised that no action was taken against us.

On Sunday afternoons, all students were lined up and taken on a two-mile trek along the Jhelum river and on the dykes. Akhtar and I had taken to making bows and arrows that were tipped with the tops of sardine cans. We would use our ammunition to engage in skirmishes with the village boys we met on the way. This activity came to an abrupt halt when Akhtar took a pot-shot at Androi Kapoor and hit him in the face with his lethal metal-tipped arrow, narrowly missing his eye. Subsequently, all bows and arrows were confiscated and destroyed by the nuns.

The language of instruction at our school was English, and the nuns would punish anyone who was caught speaking any other

language. It was a pleasant surprise, therefore, when we were taken to Srinagar town to watch an Urdu movie. *Anmol Ghari*, starring Noor Jehan, was playing. That was the first time I saw Noor Jehan on screen, and I loved the film.

The Burn Hall School in Srinagar was located in a small building with no playing grounds, as the Maharaja had refused to give the school additional space for expansion. And so the Burn Hall boys would come over on Saturday afternoons to play sports on the convent grounds. The convent children were not allowed out of the school building while the Burn Hall boys were there. Nevertheless, the girls would stream to the windows and stare at the boys as they ran about. We—the convent boys—resented this. The Burn Hall boys were also older than us; we were simply too young for the girls' attention. In fact, that was the reason we were allowed to study in a girls' school.

Speaking of girls, in mid-1944, a beautiful girl with two long plaits joined my class. She hardly stayed a month in school as she had come just for the summer. I used to sit in the middle-left row and she in the middle-centre row. One day, I took a small piece of paper and wrote 'You are my sweetheart' on it. (I did not know the spelling of heart, so I took out my history book and copied the word from the chapter on 'Richard the Lion Heart'). I passed the paper to her when the nun was not looking. After receiving my note, the girl got up and handed the slip to the nun, who called me to the front of the class. 'Out with your hands!' she demanded. I stuck out my hands, palms upwards. The nun took a cane (an improvised cane, made by cutting off the front of a squash racquet), and dealt two hard strokes on each of my palms. The girl was looking at me with a smug expression on her face as I walked back to my desk. I had been put in my place.

We would return to Abbottabad for the winter breaks; the summer breaks were too short. The students would be accompanied by the convent staff up till the Rawalpindi train station where our servants would come to receive us and take us

home. Sometimes the convent staff would even take me and Akhtar all the way to Abbottabad.

\* \* \* \*

In January 1945, Father was put in command of the 1 Assam Regiment, which was stationed at the time in Burma. A year later he was posted to Landi Kotal in the Khyber Pass to command the 15/16 Punjab Regiment, which was later disbanded. Meanwhile, the 1/14 Punjab Regiment—(the regiment that was the Sher-Dils)—had been captured by the Japanese in Singapore on 15 February 1942. Upon the return of soldiers from the POW camps and from the various 14 Punjab Regiment battalions, Father re-raised the Sher-Dils at Mirali on 16 May 1946, and took over command of the battalion.

\* \* \* \*

We had to leave the Presentation Convent in December 1946 since the school required that boys over the age of twelve be withdrawn. Children usually dislike boarding school, but I loved every moment of my time there. Father came to Srinagar and tried to get us admitted to the Burn Hall School, but the principal could not accommodate us for the 1947 term since there was no room to house any more boarders. Father proposed to the principal that he consider moving the school to Abbottabad since the Maharaja was not allowing expansion of the building. Burn Hall did then shift to Abbottabad in October 1947, into the old Abbott Hotel.

In December 1946, we went to Rehana for the winter holidays. It was wonderful to see my mother again, as I was very close to her. I would comb and braid her hair. She had no formal education so that winter I taught her English.

That winter was in fact a happy time for the whole family: Father had been promoted to a full Colonel. This, he felt, was the

highest he would be able to rise under the British. He was posted as the President of the Officers' Selection Board at New Forest, Dehra Dun, and it was decided that Akhtar and I would move to Dehra Dun with him.

Travelling by car, which was driven by Father's batman, Abdul Salam, we stopped in various cities on our way to Dehra Dun. We spent the first night in Lahore. The next day the fan-belt of our car broke outside Delhi, and we limped into the city late that night. The next morning we were off again. When we reached Meerut, the Plymouth we had been travelling in was polished and put up for sale. We stayed in Meerut for two nights and then proceeded to Dehra Dun by bus. It was evening by the time we reached New Forest. We were given two rooms in the barracks, one for Father and the other one for Akhtar and me.

After visiting various schools in Dehra Dun, my brother and I were admitted to the St. Joseph's Academy. On our return from school, we would pass the obstacle-course in the forest where the short-term commissioned officers were undergoing their tests as part of the selection process for permanent commission. We would watch officers fall, others slip, and some would end up hanging by their ankles from a tree branch. It was good entertainment.

In the evenings, Akhtar and I would take a shotgun into the forest to shoot jungle fowl. One night, returning through the forest, Akhtar took a shot at what we took to be a stray tomcat which prowled around the officers' mess. We thought that it had not been hit as it jumped to one side and went into the forest. The next day, a sepoy saw a leopard sitting close to where Akhtar had fired the shot. The leopard was alive but would not move. It had been hit in the face and blinded by the pellets. The sepoy shot the animal and brought it to the officers' mess.

This shooting pastime of ours actually proved to be a blessing in disguise: for when the tensions rose between the Hindus and the Muslims in Dehra Dun, several houses in the area were attacked but the three adjacent bungalows (of which ours was

one) occupied by Muslim officers were spared. Everyone knew that we were armed.

In April 1947, the rest of the family moved to Dehra Dun as well, and we were allotted Bungalow No. 5 on Dalanwala Road. Three months later, in August, Father left Dehra Dun to join the Boundary Field Force. Batman Abdul Salam stayed with us. He slept in the driveway with a .303 rifle loaded and ready for use.

One night, to test Abdul Salam's alertness, my mother went out and removed the rifle from the side of his bed. Abdul Salam continued to snore, undisturbed. The next morning we found him searching frantically for his rifle. So much for Abdul Salam protecting us!

My youngest sister Shakila was born in Dehra Dun on 2 August 1947. On 20 October, Father arrived with a Baluch Regiment escort—he had been promoted to Brigadier and posted to Waziristan where he had withdrawn his brigade under orders from the Quaid—with two three-ton trucks and his staff car. We were moving to Pakistan.

# 3

## PARTITION

THE FIRST STOP after leaving Dehra Dun, was Ambala. After a night's stay in Ambala, we joined a convoy from Simla led by Major Altaf Qadir. I sat with the major in his jeep, along with a Sikh driver and guard.

All around us was utter devastation. Dead bodies of men, women and children were heaped along the roadside. Vultures, bloated from feasting on human flesh, sat on the trees. Dogs, having stuffed themselves to the limit, lingered among the corpses. Wells were overflowing because of the sheer number of bodies that had piled up inside them. The afternoon was hot and we were in need of water, so we stopped at the next well we saw. When we drew up the bucket, it was filled with blood.

In the afternoon, a crowded refugee train crossed our convoy, heading in the opposite direction (east). Even the roof of the train was covered with people, presumably Hindus and Sikhs. The Indian Army escort of the train opened fire on us. Major Altaf Qadir steered the jeep towards the moving train and ordered the Sikh guard to return fire. The guard refused. Major Altaf Qadir pushed the guard out of the jeep, took hold of the Bren gun and emptied a full magazine of twenty-eight rounds onto the train. The previously crowded roof of the bogey was completely cleared of people. The Indian machine-gunner did not take up the challenge. Luckily, no damage was done to anyone in our convoy.

The horrific barbarism, death and destruction I witnessed—bodies being bulldozed into mass graves—cannot even today be erased from my memory. The mainly Muslim populations of the

small towns and villages from Ambala to Wagah were on the move towards Pakistan, trying to get onto anything that could carry them, pleading to be taken across. But the Patiala State Forces, who were supposed to aid people, were themselves out pillaging villages and towns.

We passed safely through Amritsar. However, just on the outskirts of the city was a road-block set up by armed Sikh civilians. Father and his Baluch Regiment escort went to the front of the convoy and threatened to open fire on the Sikhs if they didn't let our convoy through. The Sikhs succumbed to the threat and let us pass.

Eventually, Wagah came into sight and we saw the Pakistan flag fluttering atop the army post. It brought tears to the eyes of the elders. It was an intensely moving moment for all of us, even for the children, to see the flag for the first time. We were finally entering a country that was free—and that was totally our own.

\* \* \* \*

From Lahore, we came straight to Rawalpindi where we were allotted the annexe of 'Sita Niwas', a bungalow belonging to Sardar Sohan Singh, who had been a leading businessman of the city. The house was locked and guarded by an old Gurkha.

Massacres were still taking place when fighting broke out in Kashmir. Some Pakhtun tribesmen headed towards Kashmir heard a rumour that Sohan Singh was still in Rawalpindi. They stormed through the iron gate into the annexe, demanding to know where Sohan Singh was. Not finding him, they moved to the main bungalow, broke the doors and looted everything. The police eventually went into the bungalow and fired shots in the air to disperse the tribesmen, who scrambled over the wall towards the railway line. A civil servant was then allotted 'Sita Niwas' to live in, and he stripped it of everything that had not been carried away by the tribesmen. Sardar Sohan Singh did



come back later, but I imagine that he must have been filled with sorrow at the state of his once beautiful house.

In March 1948, we moved to Abbottabad and rented a bungalow opposite the grain godowns at the entrance to the town. My brother and I were admitted to the Burn Hall School as day scholars. Father was promoted to the rank of Major General and posted as Commander of the 14 Division in East Pakistan. When he came home on leave, he brought with him two 30-US carbines. They were small, light semi-automatic rifles. Delighted, Akhtar and I began to play truant from school and went out hunting jackals with them. My absence was noticed by the principal, Father Thyson, who called me to his office. He said, 'Gohar you play truant'. I replied, 'No Father I do not play truant'. Father Thyson kept insisting that I play truant. Not knowing the meaning of truant I said, 'Father I do not play truant, I play hockey'. He laughed and let me off—after that there was no truancy.

In the early morning of 14 August 1948, we received the sad news from Rehana about the assassination of our uncle Mohammad Jan Khan, Father's older half-brother. At midnight, a hired assassin had shot him in the back with a .303 rifle while he was sleeping. The assassin had been seen but not identified by a servant who had been asleep in the veranda at the time. My father arrived from East Pakistan two days after the incident. After reading the police report, Father put a stop to the investigations. The report had suggested that someone within the family had hired the assassin—so my father, deeply fond as he was of his half-brother, felt it was best not to pursue matters any further. After this incident, he stopped going to Rehana for his holidays. When I asked him why he did not go to Rehana any more, he replied that although his mother was still there, the person he would really go to Rehana to visit was no longer there.

In November 1949, Father was transferred from East Pakistan to the GHQ as Adjutant General. All of us then returned to Rawalpindi.

# 4

## COMING OF AGE

AFTER COMPLETING MY matriculation in March 1953, I decided to join the army. Akhtar and I both went through the same course at the Joint Services Pre-Cadet Training School in Quetta and then proceeded to the Pakistan Military Academy (PMA) Kakul in October 1954. The officers were looking for one cadet to be selected to go to Sandhurst. Brigadier G. Pigot was the Commandant. One could not find a stricter person than him. He headed the board which recommended me. Nine weeks later, I was on my way to Sandhurst.

When I arrived at Sandhurst in March 1955, I first went through the Mons Officers Training School in Aldershot, which commissioned British cadets for national service after three months of training. During this period I was made Cadet Sergeant and was commissioned along with the British cadets. After a week's holiday following the training school, I finally joined Sandhurst.

For the parade on the first day, I wore the PMA winter battle dress—an officer's attire. Within minutes the Adjutant approached me and commented approvingly on the uniform but added that I should keep it till I was commissioned, and that in the meantime I should go to the Quartermaster and get myself outfitted according to the Sandhurst requirement. Meanwhile, I took all the items that the PMA Kakul had made me bring along—a steel helmet, webbing, army boots and other heavy gear—and dumped all of it in a storeroom, as none of it was required. Later, when Asif Nawaz was preparing to come to Sandhurst, I spared him the ordeal of lugging around so much

weight by writing a letter telling him not to bring any military equipment along.

\* \* \* \*

There were three colleges in Sandhurst. I was allotted Room 114 in a building called 'The Old College'. (It had been the original Royal Military College till 1945). One day, upon opening my room window, I noticed something engraved in a cement slab outside. To my surprise, it read 'M.A. Khan', i.e. 'Mohammad Ayub Khan'. This room had been my father's then, when he was a cadet at Sandhurst in 1926! He had been in the No. 5 Company, which had been renamed 'the Dettingen Company'—the one I was in. I got a big nail and chiseled my name—G.A. Khan—under my father's.

When I was promoted to Cadet Sergeant during the senior term, I could keep photographs of my family on my desk. (As a junior cadet one could not publicly display pictures of family). A picture of my father in uniform stood among them. I noticed that Burt King, my servant, would keep looking at that particular picture. He eventually asked me if my father had been at Sandhurst in the late twenties. As it turned out, he had been Father's servant as well! The list of coincidences seemed to be endless.

Dinners in the mess were a glamorous affair, with a live band, and port and sherry passed around to toast the Queen. (The Muslim cadets would raise their glasses for the toast but not drink). Once, while sitting at the head of a long table as the Cadet Sergeant, I noticed that some cadets were not using their knives and forks properly and some were eating with their elbows on the table. These were junior cadets, mostly British. I had a message passed around the table telling all junior cadets to line up outside my room after dinner. I gave them a good dressing-down that night and told them, among other things,

that as gentlemen and future officers they should at least have learnt how to eat!

When they were dismissed and I turned towards my room, Officer Cadet R.E.B.C. Gibson approached me. 'Sir, you should have assigned me the job of pulling them up,' he said.

'And in what capacity could you be called upon to give them a lecture on table manners?' I asked him. He remained silent and came with me into my room. There, we sat and talked as if nothing had happened. I later realized that Gibson felt that as a Pakistani and an officer cadet from a former colony, I should not have been teaching the British table manners. In most cases however, I found the British cadets friendly and responsive. I was taken during short leaves to stay with my British cadet friends with their parents.

\* \* \* \*

My stay at Sandhurst in 1955-6 was a great learning experience. Apart from the training itself, I became acquainted with the British sense of humour and their steadfastness. An example that stands out in my mind is that of our military history instructor, who instructed the class that when he asked us a question in the presence of a visitor—(Sandhurst in those days hosted visitors on a daily basis, mostly from NATO and the US)—those of us who knew the answer were to raise our right hand and those who did not were to raise the left one. That way the entire class would have their hands raised every time he asked a question, and the visitors would be highly impressed. I still laugh when I recall those instances.

One misty morning we were on parade in which all three colleges, twelve companies in all, were marching in front of the Old College. That morning my roommate Officer Cadet George Gillbery—a tall, plump man who had served in the Royal Army Service Corps for two years as a driver to fulfill his national service—had pulled down the Union Jack and raised the Soviet

flag in its place. As the colour party was taking its position, the Adjutant happened to look up at the Soviet flag and froze. His eyes remained fixed on the fluttering flag for what seemed to us like hours. Finally he found the words to issue his command. 'Sergeant Major, get that dirty rag off the flag mast!' he bellowed. The Sergeant Major in turn shouted, 'Staff, get that dirty rag off the mast in double-quick time!' 'The rag' was taken down and replaced with the Union Jack, and the parade continued as if nothing had happened.

However, the matter did not end there. At breakfast a few months later, I was reading the paper and caught sight of a news item that left me stunned. My first thought was that it must be talking about something that had happened in New or Victory College. The news item reported that a mutiny had taken place at Sandhurst. The news spread and soon we had the War Office and practically the entire high command descending on us. Finally, everyone—each of the three colleges and the twelve companies—were questioned. Officer Cadet Norrie owned up to informing the press about the so-called mutiny. I thought Norrie would be withdrawn from Sandhurst, but all he got was twenty-eight days of extra parade and rose to be a senior Under Officer.

Every officer cadet was issued a standard military bicycle and was taught how to ride it. We rode these bicycles to classes, firing ranges, games; everywhere within Sandhurst. When not in use, they were placed in cycle racks outside the company building.

Late one night, the Dettingen Company picked up all the bicycles from the racks outside and brought them to our rooms. Some of us then picked up the bicycles of the Marne Company and put them in our cycle racks. Word was sent through an officer cadet of New College that the Dettingen Company had picked up all the bicycles of the Marne Company and dumped them in the lake. Upon seeing that their bicycle racks were indeed empty, the officer cadets of Marne Company came quietly over to the Dettingen Company, took all the bicycles parked

there and threw them in the lake. In the morning, we took our bicycles out of our rooms and merrily rode around on them, leaving the officer cadets of the Marne Company to fish their bicycles out of the lake.

In our final term, we were given a map-reading exercise in the setting of a thick forest. My fellow cadet had the map plotting the route with distances, and I carried the compass. Half-way through, the Parachute Regiment—our enemy—took us by surprise. Not wanting to be captured, both of us fled in different directions and I got lost in the forest. Luckily there were high-tension wires passing through the exercise area, so I followed the wires and landed right in front of my Company Commander, Major V.C.D. Ogrady. 'Well done, Khan, well done!' he congratulated me. 'You are the first to come in from the Company!' So getting lost proved beneficial!

On 10 July 1956, all the Victoria Cross holders of the Pakistani, Indian and Nepalese armies visited Sandhurst. I was responsible for looking after them. After tea, I passed their tour programme around the room and asked them to sign it. One of the Indian *jawans* hesitated when it came his turn to sign; finally, I discovered that he could not read or write. I signed for him. It is commendable that despite his background he had risen to hold the highest military award.

Meeting my people brought back memories of home. I knew I was ready to return.

# 5

## THE SHER-DILS

MY PASSING-OUT PARADE in Sandhurst, marking the end of my time there, was held on 26 July 1956. Princess Margaret was present at the occasion and took the salute. Father, who had been in England to attend the Commonwealth Commanders' Conference, also came to attend the parade. We spoke with Princess Margaret afterwards, in the Indian Army room. Princess Margaret congratulated me on receiving my commission and asked which regiment I would be joining. I told her it was to be my father's old battalion, the Sher-Dils.

I flew back to Karachi with Father and then we went by train to Rawalpindi. After ten days of holiday, I left for East Pakistan to join the Sher-Dils stationed at Kurmitola, near Dhaka.

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I was extremely happy to be posted to East Pakistan. My battalion was the division's 'defence battalion'; we were responsible for the internal security of Dhaka and Narayanganj. As a Second Lieutenant, I was appointed a B-Company officer. Major Ghulam Hassan Khan, the Company Commander, trained me well by giving me many of the company's responsibilities. Every morning, the officers would cycle from the officers' mess to the Battalion Lines to take attendance and start off the day with physical training. I would then take the B Company for a three-mile run. Soon into the run, many of the *jawans* would begin to puff and cough and fall behind. Within three days of initiating this morning-run routine, Subedar Mohammad Zaman advised me

to go easy on the *jawans*, so I relaxed the routine somewhat. The *jawans* rose to the challenge, however, and in a short period they were able to do the three-mile run with ease.

Though the course of instruction at the PMA Kakul was English, training and exercise-related orders to the junior commissioned officers and the *jawans* were given in Urdu. All orders and instructions from the commanding officers to the company commander were in English, and the latter then had to pass the orders on to their companies in Urdu. Since at Sandhurst I had been taught only in English, learning to pass orders in Urdu required a lot of work on my part.

Our main sources of entertainment in East Pakistan were visiting the Dhaka club (twice a week), catching the Sunday-morning shows at the cinema, and watching Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flights come in from Lahore and Karachi. To get to the Dhaka club or the cinema, we would ride the local rundown buses or occasionally we would cycle.

One night we were leaving the club quite late; there was no chance of finding a bus or any kind of transport at that hour. The Begum of Dhaka offered us a lift, which we accepted gratefully. Upon reaching the Mess, the second-in-command of the battalion told me to open up my room, which I did. Chairs were brought in from other officers' rooms, and the Begum stayed with us for nearly an hour, amidst much noise and laughter. The bustle woke up Lieutenant Colonel Rafi, the battalion commander, who was sleeping in the room at the end of the line of rooms.

The next morning I was marched by the Adjutant before Lieutenant Colonel Rafi who admonished me: 'Don't you know ladies are not allowed into bachelor officers' quarters?'

'The lady was the Begum of Dhaka, sir,' I informed him.

'She could be the Queen of Sheeba for all I care!' he retorted.

'Sir, in any case, it wasn't my idea to entertain anyone last night. I was made to open up my room...'

'Out!' he ordered before I could finish.



I was marched out by the Adjutant—who had also been present in my room the night before and knew the whole story, but of course he remained silent.

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Pakistan became a republic on 23 March 1956. In celebration, the armed forces were given a medal inscribed with the insignia of the republic. For the junior officers, even to have one ribbon on their chest was something to be proud of. On 23 March 1957, the Sher-Dils, along with other army formations, paraded in Paltan Maidan, Dhaka. The Republic Day Parade salute was taken by the Governor of East Pakistan. The Sher-Dils were the only regular army battalion from West Pakistan present at the occasion.

Second Lieutenant Asif Nawaz joined the Sher-Dils upon graduating from Sandhurst in July 1957. He was posted as Company Officer in the C-Company, commanded by Captain Mohammad Shafi. The economic backwardness of East Bengal compared to West Pakistan was obvious and affected the East Bengali's when they came to West Pakistan. Not having civil servants from East Bengal, officers had to be sent from West Pakistan whose attitude towards the East Bengalis was patronizing and at times worse than the officers of the East India Company. Bengali Babu was the word more or less used for all and sundry. The East Bengalis and West Pakistanis hardly mixed and very few West Pakistani officers bothered to learn Bengali.

Urdu which was the mother tongue of about 3 per cent of the population, was the language of the nation. Bengali was spoken by 51 per cent of the population. The script of both was different. Urdu in the Persian and Bengali in the Sanskrit script, which the West Pakistanis took as the script of the Hindus. The Quaid-i-Azam whilst in Dhaka University during the end of March 1948 was faced by an objecting audience of students when he

announced that Urdu and Urdu alone will be the State language.

West Pakistanis gave importance to Allama Iqbal, the East Bengalis to Nazar-ul-Islam. The language riots in Dhaka after which Bengali also became the second language and the defeat of the East Bengal Muslim League government in the provincial elections along with control of the new industries being set up by West Pakistanis in East Bengal, were possibly some of the initial factors which created a gulf between the two wings of Pakistan.

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Before leaving for East Pakistan, I had requested my mother to arrange my engagement. She had presented me with two choices: one was the daughter of a Lieutenant General and the other the daughter of Major General Habibullah Khan Khattak. I asked her to try for the latter first, since I felt that our backgrounds would be more similar and so it would be easier for us to adjust to each other.

Thus, on 30 March 1957, I was engaged to Zeb Kuli Khan Khattak in a ceremony in Rawalpindi, at which I could not be present as I was in East Pakistan. In fact, I was not even aware of the exact date of my engagement and was pleasantly surprised one day when I received a 10' x 12' photograph of my fiancée with a note from my father at the bottom saying 'your engagement photograph'. It was an arranged engagement, but I had met and talked to Zeb before, since she had been in the same class as my younger sister Naseem.

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In September 1957, I was detailed to attend the Small Arms Course in Quetta. I was happy to know that my elder brother Lieutenant Akhtar, Lieutenant Jamshed Burki, and other officers

whom I knew, would be attending the course. I ended up winning the officers' bayonet-fighting championship, and Akhtar won the shooting championship (I obtained second position). In light of my overall result, and the highest grading given after attending a course of instruction; 'A' for topping in academic knowledge and 'X' for topping in instructional capability, I was recommended as an instructor for small arms in the School of Infantry and Tactics.

Two days before the course was due to finish, Akhtar and I were called to the residence of the GOC (General Officer Commanding) and told that the Commander-in-Chief wanted to speak with us. We had no idea which matter Father wished to discuss with us, and the GOC was as clueless as we were. At the appointed time, the secrophone rang. The GOC picked it up, then gave it to Akhtar. Father explained that his ADC (aide-de-camp) Captain Afzal Khan was going back to his unit, and asked Akhtar if he wanted the position. Akhtar declined. Father then made me the same offer, and I accepted immediately.

In January 1958, I left Quetta for Rawalpindi to join Father as his ADC.

# 6

## ADC TO THE C-IN-C

I WAS EAGER to take on the role of an ADC to Father (who was then the C-in-C), although when I took up the position there were very few responsibilities associated with it. I would occasionally need to arrange an event that he was hosting or accompany him to one that he would be attending. And so I voluntarily made my life difficult by being in attendance twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. I made myself the chief's note-taker, secretary, telephone attendant, shoeshine boy and even washed his handkerchiefs, underwear and socks, and pressed his uniforms when we went on tours abroad.

I learnt a great deal as ADC. Coming in contact with senior officers helped me build confidence. Being present at meetings, conferences and training exercises gave me much insight into the army. But the most important things I learnt were from watching Father. Being his ADC brought us very close to each other and gave me the opportunity to look after him. Over time, I began to understand Father so well that I could anticipate practically every requirement of his, and did my best to make him comfortable wherever he was. After he retired, we became closer still. I would meet him every time with a kiss on both cheeks and an embrace. I still regret not being at his bedside when he passed away on 20 April 1974.

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Political uncertainty was rife during the latter part of the 1950s. As ADC, whenever I accompanied Father to witness troops'

exercises and attend conferences and functions and so forth, I would be asked by the junior officers as to why the Chief was not doing something about the situation. I did not feel it was right to reply, but the queries became more and more frequent. In order to avoid having to answer to those concerns myself, I would stay as close to Father as possible. The officers would never dare broach the subject directly with Father.

In Father's addresses to the officers (particularly in the officers' mess), he would not restrict himself strictly to military matters. He would often advise the officers on matters such as family planning and ways to better their lives. He would explain at length the advantages of a small family. Acknowledging that he himself had seven children, he would say: 'Do as I have said, not as I have done.' Though he was criticized by the ulema and the religious parties for his position on various issues (such as family planning), he cared very little for their objections and thought them to be out of step with the modern world. He always said that to maintain the status quo or slide backwards into the past was easy, but to drive the country forward was a herculean task.

Father was on tour of the Gilgit area at the end of September 1958 when he received a call from President Iskander Mirza asking him to return to Rawalpindi, as he wanted to discuss the political situation in person with Father. When we reached Rawalpindi, the President informed Father that he had decided to abrogate the constitution and declare martial law in the country. Arrangements were made to carry out this decision and some senior officers were moved from Rawalpindi to Karachi. One extra brigade of troops was moved from Quetta to Jungshahi. (There were already troops in Karachi due to the crisis of Gwadar and finally its purchase).

On 4 October 1958, I was sitting next to Father in our old Cadillac going from the Chief's House to the GHQ, when I suddenly said to Father: 'What is about to happen is not going to succeed. It will be like putting two swords in one scabbard. A

situation similar to the one in Egypt might be created: Lieutenant Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser and President Mohammad Naguib. Naguib had to be relieved.' Father turned towards me and retorted, 'I will make it work. I do not want to hear anything on this subject from you.'

On 7 October 1958, President Iskander Mirza abrogated the constitution and declared martial law. He appointed Father chief martial law administrator. There was rejoicing on the streets of Karachi. However, it seems that President Iskander Mirza very soon started having second thoughts about his decision to appoint Father to a position of so much power.

A meeting of the top generals was held. A new Commander-in-Chief had to be appointed, as Father was now the chief martial law administrator. Father proposed the name of Major General Habibullah Khan Khattak, but in the end the choice that everyone accepted was Lieutenant General M. Musa.

As things began settling down in Karachi, Father undertook a tour of East Pakistan to visit Dhaka and Chittagong. While he was away, President Iskander Mirza contacted Air Commodore Maqbool Rabb and Brigadier Qayyum Sher, asking them to arrest Father when he returned from Dhaka. The President's telephones were being monitored by the intelligence agencies, and both officers confirmed that the President had made contact with them.

When Father returned to Karachi, he found Lieutenant General Musa, Major General Yahya Khan, Major General Abdul Hamid and Major General Sher Bahadur waiting for him at the steps of his residence. An urgent meeting was held at the Chief Minister's house and Brigadier Mohammad Hayat, the Director of Military Intelligence, informed him of the President's intentions. The top-brass of the army decided that the prevailing situation with the President could not continue. They did not want to be constantly looking over their shoulders to see who was doing what, nor did they want to waste time stemming any rifts that the President may try to create amongst them. So, they

decided, there were two options: either the army could go back to the barracks and let the situation play itself out, as they had not come on their own but were asked to do so, or the President could be told to leave so that the army could carry on without his interference. After some deliberation, they decided to remove President Iskander Mirza. The ones who pressed for the President's ouster were Major General Yahya Khan and Major General Abdul Hamid.

On the evening of 27 October 1958, there was a garden party at the President's House. All senior officers assigned martial law duties were there as well. The letter of resignation for the President to sign was dictated by Major General Yahya Khan and Major General Abdul Hamid. It was typed by Major Abdul Majid Malik (who rose to the rank of a Lieutenant General and became a federal minister). It had been decided that Lieutenant General Azam Khan, Lieutenant General W.A. Burki, and Lieutenant General K.M. Sheikh would arrive at the house at midnight and tell the President to resign. A company of the 9 Punjab Regiment would disarm the police guards at the President's House.

At 11:30 p.m., Father, myself, the three Generals and a few others, stood near the car which was to take the Generals to the President's House. Lieutenant General Azam asked me for a weapon. I gave him my revolver—already loaded with six bullets—along with six spare bullets in a pouch attached to my web belt. Meanwhile, Lieutenant General Burki was looking down at his boots with a frown on his face. Eventually he said, 'I feel like a dirty dog going to Iskander Mirza in this manner, so soon after breaking bread with him.'

The telephone lines of the President's House and its entire staff were then cut. The three Generals were taken to the location and they made their way into the President's House. (The police guard had been disarmed a few minutes earlier). They went up to the drawing room on the first floor and asked the staff to call the President. The staff went to the veranda outside the President's

room, where he and his wife were asleep, and knocked on the door. Upon hearing that three Generals were waiting for her husband in the drawing room, Begum Naheed Mirza started shouting hysterically. The President emerged from the bedroom wearing a dressing gown, his right hand gripping a small .25 bore Beretta pistol in the gown pocket.

The President went into the drawing room and greeted the Generals. When everyone was seated, Lieutenant General Azam Khan explained the purpose of their visit and produced the resignation letter and a pen for him to sign. The President hesitated for a few seconds, but Lieutenant General Azam Khan put his finger on the paper and simply said, 'Sign here.' Realizing he had no choice, he signed the letter. He was told that he would be going to Quetta for a few days and, after arrangements were made, from Quetta to London.

The three Generals returned to the house where Father was staying. After tea and coffee were served, Lieutenant General Azam Khan asked me to go to the residence of Brigadier Nawazish Ali Khan, the Military Secretary to the President, to ask him to go to the President's House. I drove to Brigadier Nawazish Ali Khan's house and knocked on the main door. The Brigadier himself came to the door and was surprised to see me. 'Is all well?' he asked.

'All is well, but please go to the President's House,' I replied.

'Is the President all right?'

'He is.'

Brigadier Nawazish understood the situation then, and asked no further questions.

The next morning, Major General Iskander Mirza and his wife were flown to Quetta with Brigadier Bahadur Sher as their escort. They were made comfortable in the Quetta Residency, and spent their four-day stay playing bridge with officers from Quetta. Meanwhile, arrangements were made through the British High Commissioner for Major General Iskander Mirza to settle in London.



Major General and Begum Iskander Mirza were to fly to London via Karachi. Begum Ispahani called President's House (I picked up the phone since I was on duty as ADC) asking for permission to see off Major General Iskander Mirza and his wife at the airport. I asked Father on the intercom if this was possible. 'Certainly,' he replied. 'Tell Begum Ispahani that she or anyone else who wants to go can do so.'

I gave Begum Ispahani the message. I assume then that she and others—did go to see off Major General Iskander Mirza and his wife.

It seems to me, from the way he handled the situation, that Father was an exception. Every leader brings with them their own team, mostly for security reasons (but also because it is easier to work with hand-picked officials). Under normal circumstances, after Iskander Mirza had been removed from office, the entire cabinet would have been asked to resign. But not a single minister was asked to leave. Similarly, the military secretary, ADCs, civilian officers and secretary to the President were all asked to continue in office. The entire staff stayed on—with the exception of a personal attendant of Begum Naheed Mirza and the Adjutant of the President's Bodyguards, Captain Hamid Ali Noon, who himself requested to be transferred (as he was the son-in-law of the ousted Prime Minister, Sir Feroze Khan Noon). Father did not even remove the cook, who continued to serve him to the best of his ability. 'Their experience would prove useful,' Father said.

Father also contacted Humayun Mirza, son of Major General Iskander Mirza, and told him that Iskander Mirza was a good friend of his, and that what had happened must not lead Humayun to believe that he would be affected. Father told him that he must remain in touch and that if he faced any problems, he would do his best to help him out. Unfortunately, Humayun Mirza left for the USA and severed all contact. Father gave his approval for two pensions for Major General Iskander Mirza, which was his due, one as a civil servant and the other as

President. However, even with both pensions put together, the amount of money was barely enough to live a simple life in Pakistan, let alone in London, where the cost of living was much higher.

Soon after the exit of Major General Iskander Mirza, Father announced that there would be a public meeting in the polo ground next to the President's House. Some political leaders came to see Father a few days before the meeting. Their suggestion to Father was that they should get people riled up against the fallen politicians and arrangements could be made to bring the politicians to the stage, line them up against a sand-bag wall and have them shot. Upon hearing this, Father went red in the face and nearly kicked the politicians out of the room. 'If I kill twenty,' he said, 'then two hundred, and then two thousand will be killed in efforts to remove my government! This process will never stop. We do not want this country to be another Iraq!'

Father moved into the President's House after the departure of Major General Iskander Mirza. Now, Iskander Mirza was not a tall man; Father, on the other hand, was a very tall man. The former President's double-bed was not long enough for Father, so he had the footboard removed and two cushioned stools placed at the end of the bed. He continued to sleep on this makeshift bed for more than two months without complaining. It was when the chief engineer (Ayaz Khattak) of the Public Works Department came to the house for an inspection and found out about this sleeping arrangement that a proper bed was brought in.

A process of disqualifying politicians, called the Elective Bodies Disqualification Order (EBDO), was introduced in 1959. Politicians who were corrupt were given charge sheets and disqualified for ten years. However, they were free to challenge the disqualification and take the matter to the Supreme Court if they wished. The former Speaker, Maulvi Tamizuddin, and Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy challenged their disqualifications.

Both won their cases, but most of the disqualified politicians chose to remain in the background and avoid active politics.

However, contact with the disqualified politicians was not broken. Mr Daultana's family would come to see Father in Murree and we would go to his cottage near the Governor's House at Kashmir Point. Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan, who had also been disqualified, led a long procession after his disqualification from the old Attock Bridge to Peshawar, and was arrested for making objectionable statements. Father was about to go on a foreign tour when Qayyum Khan was arrested. Fearing that he may be mistreated in Father's absence, he wrote Father a letter and insisted that it be delivered to him before he left. The letter reached Father when he was at the airport. Upon reading the letter, he gave instructions for Qayyum Khan to be released immediately.

. . . .

Father was a simple man. He enjoyed humming Urdu songs while taking a bath. For personal grooming he would use a hair tonic and brush his hair straight back. His eating habits were very simple too. *Chota hazari* ('bed tea') was brought to wake him in the morning followed by breakfast consisting of fruit juice, half a piece of *makki-ki-roti*, yoghurt, and occasionally fruit as well. I hardly ever heard him order anything especially for himself. Other than roast duck or partridge that he had shot, he ate whatever was served. He would admonish the *abdar* if he tried to refill his glass and tell him, 'Why are you wasting water? I will ask for it when I need to.' Similarly, he would go around switching the lights off in the verandas to save electricity, even when he was President. Though we had two cars, he would go from 290 Peshawar Road to the GHQ on a bicycle throughout his time as Major General and Adjutant General. Whenever possible, he used a railway saloon to travel and stayed in it to cut costs and not be a burden on his hosts. Throughout his

presidency, he used the former president's Cadillac; he never felt the need to get another car despite suggestions from his staff to do so.

As Commander-in-Chief and later as President, Father would go for a short drive, sometimes up to Rawat or towards the 17th milestone on Murree Road. Traffic was thin then. Father would invariably stop his car and ask any elderly person standing by the side of the road to hop into the reserve car which followed his own. He was very strict with money; only when it was absolutely necessary would he buy something. He insisted on simplicity.

On certain occasions my wife Zeb and I would visit Father at the President's House. For the food consumed by the two of us, we would be presented with a bill (which I paid), even if we sat at the table with my parents. In fact, if the President ordered some items from the comptroller of the President's House, be it even soft drinks, he too would be presented with a bill.

Father's house in Rehana did not have a direct water supply. Water would be brought on donkeys from the village well half a mile away. There was no telephone in that house till his dying day. Never did he use a helicopter to go to Rehana. When, at his funeral, two army helicopters brought ten Generals to Rehana, an old man of the village remarked, 'Wah! Sadar Sahib, all through your life you did not show us helicopters and now when you are no more with us we see helicopters in Rehana!'

As with his caps as well, he would send his Karakuli caps to the cap-maker to get the style changed, but he would never throw them away. The only thing that never lasted were his pens; the nib could not stand the pressure he exerted on it, especially when he signed his name.

. . . .

Being ADC to Father when he was Commander-in-Chief was an excellent experience, but being his ADC when he was President

was an entirely different cup of tea. It entailed protocol, much of which I did not care for; things such as seating and receiving visitors from their cars, showing them into the President's office, seeing visitors off or making table plans for the many lunches and dinners hosted by the President. Therefore, in January 1959, I requested Father to send me back to my battalion—the Sher-Dils.

# 7

## RETURN TO THE SHER-DILS

THE SHER-DILS WERE in Lahore when I returned, and I was given the B Company to command. We underwent extensive training as we were part of the 103 Brigade commanded by Brigadier Gul Mawaz, who was an excellent officer and made us work hard.

The Sher-Dils had been allocated the area along the BRB canal near the village of Burki as our operational area in the event of war. Officers were taken there to familiarize them with the terrain and each company commander was shown his area. We positioned two companies on the canal facing the village of Burki. One company was put in depth and the other—my company—in reserve. Throughout the day, while all company and weapons positions were being decided, I was sulking. The Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel A.A.K. Niazi, noticed that I had been conspicuously silent and suggested that I accompany him on the ride back to Lahore. I agreed, and on the way back I told him what was bothering me. It was that my company was better in all fields than the other three companies, I told him, and yet it had been put in a counter-attack position.

'The pressure on the two forward companies on the canal bank will be intense,' Lieutenant Colonel A.A.K. Niazi said after hearing me out. 'They will face artillery and tank fire. There is a possibility that the Indians might cross the canal and get into the positions of the Sher-Dils. This will be the time to launch the counter-attack in order to break up the Indian advance. This counter-attack will have to be swift and strong. I want an officer who will launch a fearless and determined counter-attack to throw the enemy back across the canal.'

I gave his comment some thought and felt better. After that, I was a lot more enthusiastic about training my company for the counter-attack role.

From Lahore, the Sher-Dils moved to the Tilla ranges for field-firing exercises. It was good to be out of the cantonment, away from the dull training routines being imparted to troops who had years of experience. It was ironic that, for instance, the training programme included instructions on how to load, unload, and strip rifles, machine-guns, 106mm anti-tank recoilless rifles, mortars, trucks, jeeps, you name it. Evidently, they had forgotten that the *jawans* and officers could do all of this blindfolded, having years of experience under their belt.

Before beginning our firing practice, the police were required to search the designated area and produce a certificate verifying that there were no unauthorized persons present. However, as soon as the artillery and mortars would stop firing, local men, women and children would appear out of nowhere to collect the metal scraps from the artillery and mortar shells. These scrap-pickers would always be hidden in the target areas while the firing was going on, but their presence did not cause any real problems or interference. Very seldom were there casualties.

Firing the eight 106mm anti-tank rifles, each *jawan* would practice shooting at targets—both stationary and moving—from a distance of 1,400 yards. (The unburned propellant and smoke would create a back-blast that could be felt upto 25 yards away—a big shortcoming of the rifle, as it would be detected very easily in war). The targets were hit at over 95 per cent accuracy.

Our bugler, Sher Khan, excited by what he saw, declared that he too wanted to try his hand at shooting. I first showed him how to fire the .50 spotting machine gun and then, if the range had been established by its tracer bullets (which glow in their flight path), he could fire the 106mm recoilless rifle. Sher Khan's very first shot was a bullseye.

A firepower demonstration and a 'brigade in attack' were to be enacted for the occasions of the Shah of Iran's visit to the Tilla

ranges (this was early 1959). The 103 Brigade attack went like clockwork. Heavy guns were fired from the GT road area. It seemed like actual war! Once the demonstration was over, the officers of the 103 Brigade were called up to meet the Shah of Iran and the President, and given a pat on the back. Brigadier Gul Mawaz was pleased as punch, as was Lieutenant Colonel Niazi. During lunch, the British Military Attaché, Brigadier J. Harington of the Royal Artillery—my prior college commander at Sandhurst—came up to me. I asked him what he thought of the demonstration. 'As good as any army can put up,' he said approvingly. 'But Gohar, beware that some of the logistical essentials which are so important during war were sidelined. Troops must be trained to bring up ammunition, fuel, vehicles, food, evacuate casualties, etc. These aspects were underplayed, which may cost you dearly during war.'

I thought about what he had said, and nodded.

After the demonstration, the 103 Brigade moved back to the barracks in Lahore, and the Sher-Dils went back to the Tilla ranges to resume field-firing and training. While at the Tilla ranges, we received orders to use up all of our training ammunition and from there move to Rawalpindi to serve as the defence battalion for the President's House—the capital was being shifted out from Karachi to Rawalpindi, as was the President.

On reaching our unit lines in Lahore, I was instructed to proceed to Rawalpindi to find suitable accommodation for the battalion. The army had given up their accommodation and barracks in Rawalpindi and Chakdala to ease the sudden housing shortage associated with the shifting of the capital. (The construction of Islamabad had not started yet). My company was assigned to set up camp at the site of the President's new office which was previously office of the general manager of Murree Brewery. When I went to see the site, I found that the land was swampy, the vegetation dense, and the air thick with mosquitoes.



Half a dozen vultures were sitting in the trees, simply looking around.

The next day the *jawans* cleared the area and set up camp. I did an investigation of the President's House and office and identified various security posts for both, and reported back to the battalion headquarters. In no time, the guardrooms were prepared and standing orders relayed to the guards. The B Company did a wonderful job.

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In early January 1960 I was selected to attend the Infantry Officers Advance Course at Fort Benning, Georgia, USA, which was to be followed by the Airborne (Paratrooper) Course.

Major Bob Gutner of the US Army was with me in the Infantry Officers Advanced Course, and was the American officer designated to look after me during my stay at Fort Benning. He lived in the officers' accommodations with his wife, Barney, and two young children. I became friends with this couple and they would often invite me to their home for dinner. For the mid-term break in the course, they had planned a trip to Florida and invited me to come along. We went by car and stayed in a beach hut belonging to the US Army. It was a relaxing holiday. I repeatedly invited Major Gutner to come to Pakistan as a member of the United States Military Assistance Group, but he was unable to obtain a posting.

During my time in America, knowing the English language was of great advantage to me. I was invited to address a number of US Army infantry battalions stationed around Fort Benning, and talk about Pakistan and its army. The American instructors were impressed by the Pakistani officers who attended their courses and found them to be skilled and professional. The Pakistani officers were often asked for their analysis, following a training session or a class.

There was a gap of a week between the Advanced Course and the Airborne (Paratrooper) Course. I utilized it to exercise still more and prepare for the next course. (The entrance test for the paratrooper course required forty pull-ups, forty push-ups, and a five-mile run). Also during that week, I—like the American officers attending the course—had my hair cut very short. This was a precautionary measure; in case of a head injury, it would be easier to stitch the wound if the hair was short—an affair that would otherwise be quite messy.

There was no such thing as walking from one class to the other; one had to double-march. In fact, every day began with a five-mile run early in the morning. The training for the Airborne Course included jumping out of a mock aircraft, making a five-point landing, and ensuring that the parachute did not drag the trooper. You had to get up quickly, for if the wind was strong it would blow open the parachute, and then you would have to do a lot of running around it to gather it.

We spent a week jumping from towers which were 250 feet high. A T-10 parachute was put on a ring, and you were hoisted up to the top of the tower. When ready to jump, you had to put both hands on top of your helmet—this was the signal to the cable operator to release the parachute which was already open around the ring. You would feel a sudden jerk upon the release of the parachute, and then you would glide gently down to the ground and make a five-point landing. Sometimes the wind was so strong that you could be blown towards the tower and get caught in it. And no reserve parachutes were allowed!

For jumps from the C-119 aircraft, reserve chutes were of course used. While putting on the parachute with the reserve chute, you had to bring the harness up firmly between the legs. The instructor would always warn: 'Mind your family jewels, sirs!'

For both the Infantry Officers Advance Course and the Airborne Course, I was graded as 'outstanding'. I also received

letters of commendation from the Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army.

Having completed the courses, I returned to Pakistan on 8 August 1960.

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In early 1961, I was promoted from Company Commander to Adjutant of battalion. Captain Asif Nawaz became the Quartermaster. During this period I received a letter from the GHQ asking whether Asif Nawaz and I would like to join the Central Services of Pakistan (CSP). I called Captain Asif Nawaz to my office and told him that I was not accepting the offer and advised him to do likewise. He agreed with my view. If Asif Nawaz had gone into the CSP, he would have retired, at most, as a federal secretary; not doing so enabled him to rise to the position of Chief of Army Staff some years later.

In March 1961, I was sent to Cliffden, Murree to attend an Intelligence course. On Wednesdays we would be free for half of the day, so I would drive down to Rawalpindi in the afternoon and return early the next morning to be there in time for my classes. I would do the same on Saturday afternoons and take along any course-mate who wanted to go to Rawalpindi. Upon completion of the course, the student officers were called before the commanding officer and given their result and overall performance assessment. When my instructors came to know that I had obtained an A-X, they could not hide their surprise. They had not thought me a serious student—going off to Rawalpindi as frequently as I did. What they did not know was that I made all those trips to Rawalpindi to be with my wife who was ill and had been prescribed complete bed-rest. I would study at her bedside and she helped me with my assignments. In fact, I was able to devote more time to my studies than I would have if I had spent that time in Cliffden.

Once the course in the Intelligence School was over, I was retained for the two-week Air Photo Interpretation Course. Then I did a 3-inch mortar course in Quetta. I got an A-X in each of the three courses and was recommended as an instructor for all three.

On 9 October 1961, after a long day of practice for the Dushak Day Parade, I took my wife to the family ward of the Civil Military Hospital (CMH) where our first child, a baby girl, was born at 9:20 p.m. We named her Shireen. Needless to say, we were delighted. I doted on her completely. She was a strong-willed girl right from the start, and my grandmother was fond of saying that Shireen was just like her in temperament.

In mid-1961, the United States coaxed Pakistan into sending a military brigade to Vietnam. A brigade group was ear-marked for this purpose and the Sher-Dils were to be one of the battalions. But before the brigade group could be assembled and given training and equipment, the Pakistani government changed its mind.

Around that time the issue of Goa—which was then a Portuguese colony—was also becoming contentious. The Indians were trying to reclaim the island, but the Portuguese were not willing to give it up. The Indians took the Americans into their confidence and asked them to restrain Pakistan in the event that they attacked the Portuguese. Despite the fact that the Indian Army was ill-equipped—some of the Indian troops even wearing ordinary running shoes!—the Portuguese did not have the strength or equipment to resist them.

During this time, the Pakistan Army had been put on alert and some elements started to move into their operational areas. The Sher-Dils had crossed the Sohan River bridge and were approaching Rawat when they received orders to return to Rawalpindi. When we returned, I asked Father why we had been called back. He told me that the Indian Army had not moved towards the Pakistan border, and further that the Portuguese would surrender any moment. He was right.

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India entered into a war with China in 1962. The Indian troops in NEFA (North-East Frontier Agency) had been encroaching on lands on the Chinese side of the Indo-Sino border. China launched an attack and the Indian 4 Division was routed. A large number of Indian troops surrendered.

Many in Pakistan thought that this was the moment to attack India so as to liberate Kashmir. However, while it is true that the Indians were demoralized, not a single Indian soldier or aircraft positioned for operations against Pakistan had been withdrawn. Also, such an initiative may not have been supported by any other country. In fact, the US and the rest of the world were helping India fight against China—New Delhi had been given C-119 transport planes by the Americans for use in the NEFA area.

Quadratullah Shahab mentions in his book that a Chinese student who was studying Urdu in Pakistan, came to his residence in October 1962, and informed him that the Chinese Army had entered areas in Ladakh and NEFA. The student suggested that since Mr Shahab was close to the Field Marshal, he should persuade the latter to move the Pakistan Army forward in Azad Kashmir and take advantage of the situation. Mr Shahab asked the student if the Foreign Office had been informed and if he was conveying an official Chinese suggestion, to which the student replied in the negative. Nevertheless, Mr Shahab decided to awaken the President at 3 a.m. to tell him what the student had said. Father told Mr Shahab to go home and go to bed. Had it been anyone else, Father would have given him quite a lashing. How had a senior officer believed what just any Chinese student had told him? Anyhow, this incident was never officially or otherwise discussed by the Chinese or by the President.

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A sand-model exercise was being conducted by the Sher-Dils for the Rawalpindi garrison officers. I worked with the intelligence section of the battalion to prepare the sand model, basing it on what I had seen the US Army do. After the exercise, the commandant of the Intelligence School asked me to join the School as an instructor. I told him I could not take the post as I was resigning from the army.

Yes, I had decided to resign from the army. For I felt that if I were to stay on—mind you, I loved the army—I would inevitably be branded, at some point or the other, as a person with a political background and treated likewise. How could it be otherwise, with a father who was the President of the country and various relatives who were active in politics? Besides, Father would one day cease to be President, and his governance and his person would be criticized in lectures and discussions. In those situations, I would have only two choices: to keep quiet and fume in my seat, or to get up and confront the officer, the latter of which would almost immediately result in my resignation. Even if I were to adopt the first option and remain quiet, I would still be shunted from one region to the other for security reasons—which would again prompt me to resign. And then it would probably be too late in life to look around for a new career. I thus came to the conclusion that I should leave the army. When Father heard of my decision, he was very disappointed.

In March 1962, my resignation was accepted. A farewell was arranged for me by the Sher-Dils and I was dined out by the officers. I presented the Sher-Dils with an elephant's tusk. This elephant had been shot in the Chittagong Hills by Father when he was GOC of the 14 Division in East Pakistan.

The army had been my life. Leaving it was like tearing out a part of me. Many people have said that I should never have left the army, but what is destined always happens.

# 8

## GHANDHARA INDUSTRIES

AFTER RESIGNING FROM the army, I joined my father-in-law, Lieutenant General (retd) Habibullah Khan Khattak in his business ventures. My association with the Ghandhara Industries subsequently became an important tool in the hands of the opposition and the media to attack Father.

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General Motors had established an assembly plant in the SITE area of Karachi. It was set up to assemble Chevrolet cars and Bedford trucks and buses. The General Motors plant in Karachi assembled about three hundred Chevrolets per year. Most of the machinery in this plant had been brought from the General Motors plant in Bombay and was old and worn out, but there had been no other option as the number of vehicles being assembled in Karachi was very low and it was necessary to economize on costs. Still, the plant had been operating well enough until the government of Pakistan called for a truck/bus progressive manufacturing programme to be submitted by interested manufacturers. Mack Trucks, Ford and Dodge were among the applicants. General Motors felt that an economical manufacturing programme would not be possible and decided not to submit a proposal. They had pulled out of India earlier for the same reasons.

The government decided in favour of Mack Trucks on the assumption that funds would be made available from USAID for the import of trucks and buses from America since the Pakistan

government did not have the required funds. Mack also proposed to export vehicles to the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia from their plant in Karachi. So, in order to provide Mack with a reasonable volume of sales, the Pakistan government allowed it a monopoly. The armed forces, Pakistan Road Transport and other government organizations were obliged to buy from Mack alone, and it was to be the exclusive recipient of all USAID funds. The only exception the government allowed was that overseas Pakistanis could import trucks/buses with their own foreign exchange.

General Motors realized there was no future for them in a low-volume market monopolized by Mack Trucks. The government had also put restrictions on the value of cost and freight for cars that could be imported for assembly, and this again put General Motors in a vulnerable position as the range of small cars falling within the imposed cost and freight limit were not being manufactured by General Motors. Thus, General Motors decided to sell its interests in Pakistan. Lieutenant General (retd) Habibullah Khan bought General Motors (Pakistan), and I became a shareholder and Managing Director of the new company, Ghandhara Industries.

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The opposition parties portrayed the purchase of General Motors (Pakistan) and the setting up of the Ghandhara Industries as a favour granted to us by the government. They refused to acknowledge the fact that it was a commercial deal between two private companies and hence the government had no part in it. They spread the word that the President of Pakistan was instrumental in persuading General Motors to sell their plant to Lieutenant General (retd) Habibullah Khan and myself. They also tried to insinuate that Habibullah Khan was behaving as the 'front man', while Father was really the one benefiting. The thrust of their attack was directed to discredit Father. However, they



considered it prudent not to openly criticize Father, so instead they used the Ghandhara Industries as a means to demonstrate that corruption was rampant and that the President's son was directly involved in it. They initiated wild rumours that I had bought most of the lucrative plants in the country. For instance, at a reception at the Sind Club, an American asked me if I had bought the Metropole Hotel. According to a similar rumour, I had bought a fabulous hotel in Switzerland. In fact, one of the jokes was that on being told that the opposition had started a rumour factory, I had replied that I would buy it! Some pretty wild stories were being concocted.

During one of his visits to Karachi, Father invited Lieutenant General (retd) Habibullah Khan and I over for lunch. When the conversation turned to Ghandhara Industries, Father plainly said that we had made a mistake by purchasing General Motors; and since the government had given Mack a complete monopoly over the import and export of trucks and buses, we couldn't even consider import an option to get the funds flowing. We felt sick at this revelation. Driving back to the factory, my father-in-law told me to start making plans to convert the assembly plant into a workshop for repairing vehicles. I told him that this was neither possible nor economical; our people do not trust large workshops. People fear that the original parts of their vehicles will be replaced with old or defective ones, and therefore want to supervise the operations themselves, which could not happen in the kind of large warehouse setting, far from urban and residential areas, that we were considering for the purpose. I asked my father-in-law to give the Ghandhara team time. They would turn the business around, I promised.

The government's decision to give the monopoly to Mack Trucks was not the only problem we were facing. General Motors had imported approximately five hundred Chevrolet trucks with a 3-cylinder diesel engine. The engine compartment under the bonnet was large but the diesel engine was very small—it developed the same power as the 6-cylinder engine by striking

both upwards and downwards. For two months not one truck was sold; trucks were simply being assembled and stored in the yard. A dealers' meeting was called to give them a pep talk and incentives but they were not genuinely interested. After the meeting, Rana Khudadad of Rana Motors suggested that we convert the normal control trucks into forward-control buses, which meant bringing forward the steering wheel, as well as the clutch, foot and hand brakes along with the instrument panel. The idea offered hope, and I immediately gave instructions for the conversion process to begin. It took us three weeks to get the drawings done and restore a flow on the assembly line. Meanwhile, General Motors withdrew the warranty on the truck because we had changed all the safety items and carried out major modifications. The converted vehicles slowly started being sold as buses but the customers were not happy with the 3-cylinder diesel engine as it was small and noisy.

Approximately one hundred and fifty Opel two-door cars were also packed in boxes awaiting assembly. Two-door cars have never been popular in Pakistan. A huge Punjabi *zamindar* wearing a *tehmad* came to my office and said that these two-door Opel cars were no good. When I asked him why, he said that while sitting in the back seat with his *hukka* he was unable to spit out of the window as the rear-window would open just three inches. He had to climb over to the front seat, he complained, just so that he could spit.

The price of a Bedford truck imported using bonus vouchers (for which the exchange rate was Rs10 to the dollar) was 200 per cent higher compared to the Mack truck that was imported at Rs3.72 to the dollar. Now the real challenge was to bring down Mack Trucks through competition. The price factor on cost and freight value for government sales was evidently in favour of Mack. Using bonus vouchers or home delivery for government orders was out of the question. And so another dealers' meeting was called in Karachi. After the meeting, Chaudhry Hamid of Faisalabad came to my office. He had started as a truck driver

and worked his way up to become a General Motors dealer and was now working for Ghandhara. He asked us to buy him a Mack truck and within a month he would be able to discredit the product to such an extent that no private operator would mention the name of Mack. When he unfolded his plan, I jumped at it. The next day a Mack truck was bought for Rs32,000, and given to Chaudhry Hamid. He tied it behind his Bedford truck and towed it from one truck stop to another, all the way from Karachi to Peshawar and back, saying that the engine of this brand new truck had ceased and he wanted to know if any spares were available in the market. (Mack Trucks had not imported spare parts nor were they available anywhere in Pakistan). This 'ceased-engine' story buried Mack Trucks forever. Mack Trucks in stock were palmed off to the army.

Dealers were called to order Bedford trucks on bonus vouchers via the home delivery scheme, using the services of overseas Pakistanis. I told the sales department not to bother about government orders and to concentrate instead on the private sector. The department was also told to make available spare parts for Bedford trucks even in the most remote regions; after all, a loaded truck which breaks down has to be on the move again within hours. The plan succeeded and sales picked up. Within a year Mack Trucks had to close down despite the monopoly they were given. I felt like our team had beaten a card player whose hand had contained all the aces.

The next phase was to go in for local manufacture of the Bedford truck. Soon, the percentage of the locally manufactured components went up to 64 per cent without bothering to obtain government's sanction.

Early in 1965, USAID funds were made available for importing trucks from America. Mack Trucks had closed up operations so the funds that had initially been allotted solely to Mack were distributed among various truck assemblers in Pakistan. Ghandhara Industries was allotted funds for two hundred trucks, the same as the rest of the assemblers.

Ghandhara Industries encountered a major problem at this juncture. General Motors had only the Chevrolet truck with the 3-cylinder diesel engine to offer. This engine was a failure in Pakistan. Before taking any funds from the government, I went to New York to discuss with General Motors the possibility of putting a Bedford diesel engine in the American Chevrolet truck. The company felt insulted when I told them that the 3-cylinder diesel engine had been a failure in Pakistan, and they showed me all sorts of slides and films of this engine being used by the US Army. This engine could go to the moon, I assured them, and the US Army may well rave about it, but the simple Pakistani truck driver would not accept the engine. Finally, General Motors agreed to put the Bedford diesel engine from their plant in the UK into the Chevrolet truck. The USAID requirement was that the Bedford diesel engine would have to be shipped to America to match the other components of the Chevrolet truck at a US port before it could be shipped to Pakistan. This was an extra cost which General Motors had to absorb, but was willing to do so as this recipe—that of a tried, tested and reliable engine in a heavier and stronger chassis—was sure to produce good results. However, it was then that the 1965 Pakistan-India war broke out, and the army froze the operation and took possession of the entire stock of trucks present in the plant at the time.

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Two Toyota land cruisers fitted with a six-cylinder petrol engine had been given to the army for trial, to see if it served better than the American jeep. The land cruisers were extensively tried and tested and finally rejected by the army on the grounds that they were four inches higher than the jeep, which would require more time to dig trenches for them, and because of their height they would also be easier to spot in the forward areas. There was an embargo on the American jeep when the 1965 war with India began. The army wanted jeeps very urgently and approached us

for this purpose. Luckily, there were one thousand Toyota land cruisers lying on the docks in Japan for the Indonesian air force, who had been unable to pay for them. Toyota reduced the price, and shipped them to Pakistan. Ghandhara had to certify that these vehicles were ordered by the Forest Department, as Japan had also imposed an embargo on the sale of military vehicles to Pakistan. The Toyota land cruiser hence became the most popular vehicle of its kind in the army.

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On 17 February 1965, Zeb's mother died in a car accident near Burhan. Her father re-married, which distressed her and her siblings. From the outset, their relations with their stepmother were strained, and this affected relations between me and my father-in-law. Under these circumstances, I decided to disinvest my shares and left Ghandhara Industries in November 1968.

At the time I sold my shares, Ghandhara Industries was the leading truck plant in Pakistan. The plant was nationalized in 1972 by the Bhutto government, and business suffered due to the very high wages paid to labour, excessive staff, and the careless attitude adopted towards customers. The company should have diversified to another range of trucks, but that did not happen. Eventually the plant even stopped production of the Bedford trucks. The business incurred heavy losses and the plant was finally closed with losses of close to forty crore rupees.

Interestingly, Ghandhara Industries was renamed National Motors after the plant was nationalized, and later put up for sale by the Privatization Commission. My father-in-law bought it in 1993 despite the fact that every financial services team he consulted advised him against purchasing it—the plant was in debt by about forty crore rupees and neither was it assembling Bedford trucks, which had been its mainstay in the past. Despite everything, my father-in-law went ahead and bought it—evidently more for sentimental reasons than anything—and

changed the name back to Ghandhara Industries. The plant continued to lose money and its losses had accumulated to about 106 crores at the time of my father-in-law's death in December 1994. His youngest son Ahmad Kuli Khan Khattak took over the business and through sheer hard work he managed to turn the tables and make the company a profitable institution once more.

# 9

## GLIMPSES OF MY FAMILY

### **Zebunissa Begum**

BORN IN PESHAWAR on 29 January 1940, Zeb obtained her B.A. from the University of Punjab in 1959. She was chosen by my parents to be my wife, and we were engaged on 31 March 1957, while I was in Dhaka. Our families knew each other well, much before we were engaged.

The wedding took place on 4 December 1959. Up until then my brother Akhtar had consistently put off his marriage. However, when the date of my wedding was fixed he too decided not to wait any longer. In fact, he decided that he wanted to get married before I did, so his wedding was fixed for 1 December 1959 and a joint valima was held on 5 December at the President's House.

My prospective father-in-law, Lieutenant General Habibullah Khan, had retired from the army a few months before our wedding. Zeb and I had been engaged for almost two years by then and there was a strong possibility of our engagement being broken off due to his retirement. People from both sides of the family were all set to sour relations between us. Father was the only voice of reason among them. He told me and Zeb that Habibullah Khan's retirement should in no way affect our engagement. Zeb's family assembled to discuss the engagement. Her father was for breaking the engagement but her grandmother said a Pakhtun's commitment must be honoured. At a time when there should have been warmth and cordiality between the families, we were instead faced with various difficulties and

tensions. Had it not been for the commitment between Zeb and I, and support from Father and her grandmother, the engagement would have been broken.

The wedding ceremony was to take place in Peshawar, and it was to be kept as simple as possible. On the wedding day, as Father, Mother, and other relatives were driving up to Peshawar, it began to rain. As we were approaching Wah, Father's escort car skidded off the road. It got to be evening when we finally reached Zeb's residence in Peshawar. After the wedding ceremony, Father left a little earlier than the others to receive the bride in Rawalpindi. Zeb and I then left together for Rawalpindi with my mother sitting beside her.

At the joint valima there were only 250 guests. The cabinet gave us each a small silver tea set with their names engraved on the tray. We did not accept any other gifts. About a month later, Begum Nusrat Bhutto came to see my mother and gave her wedding presents for both Akhtar and myself. One of the gifts was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's pocket cigarette case and the other was her own gold wristband. Begum Nusrat Bhutto said that since she could not afford to buy us something new, she was giving us items that belonged to their family. Mother gave me both items, and I asked my wife to put them away and not use them as we would return them to the Bhutto children one day. Hence, when Benazir became Prime Minister, I told her that I had in my custody two *amanats* belonging to her mother, and I would return these items to her children when they got married. I could not give it to her brothers or sister as I had not been invited to their weddings.

Shireen, our first child, was born in 1961. When Zeb was pregnant with our second child, she went to Nathiagali to stay with my parents for a few days. There she contracted German measles from some visitor and consequently our second child, Tariq, was also affected: he was less than three pounds at birth and afflicted with severe deafness. Later we found that he also had a heart murmur and when he was about twenty years old,



was diagnosed as having glaucoma, and his eye had to be operated upon. It must be said though, that Tariq has coped with all these difficulties very bravely. He has learned to speak despite a hearing loss of 82 decibels right from birth. Tariq wears a hearing aid and now works as a computer assistant in Islamabad. He is married and the father of four girls and lives separately.

It makes me happy to see all of my children settled into their lives and homes. Shireen is married to Dr Iqbal Saifullah Khan. Tariq's wife, Sharafat, is from the Afridi tribe. Zenab is married to my nephew, Adnan Aurangzeb from Swat. Meher is married to Omar Shahzad Khan of the Mohammad Zai tribe. Omar married Shehrnaz, daughter of Anwar Saifullah Khan. All my daughters did well in their B.A. examinations, and Shireen even topped at the Peshawar University. Omar completed his MBA from George Washington University with honours.

I have to give Zeb all the credit for bringing up our children so well. I was busy in the National Assembly sessions in Dhaka and Rawalpindi and Islamabad, and after 1973, in Abbottabad. My incarceration from June 1976 till July 1977 in the Peshawar Jail placed on Zeb the entire responsibility of looking after the children and their education, in addition to following my trial in the Special Court in Peshawar as well as conducting and fighting for my election to the National Assembly. During this period she had three serious car accidents while travelling between Abbottabad and Peshawar in connection with my court cases.

Zeb is now affiliated with the Pakistan Muslim League-(Q) and was elected on reserved seat for women as a member of the National Assembly in 2002. She has served as member of the National Council of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, and chairperson of the Family Planning Association of Pakistan. She is also the founding member of the Kato Women's Complex, Haripur and founding president of the Binte Hazara Welfare Foundation, Haripur.

## **Akhtar Ayub Khan**

You know Akhtar by now: my brother, elder to me by two years. Throughout our childhood, we were inseparable. Both he and I were very fond of hunting, which is how much of our time together was spent. He was an excellent shot.

We were together at St. Mary's Cambridge School, Rawalpindi, and Joint Services Pre-Cadet Training School, Quetta. Having him there in Quetta, as someone who gave me support and guidance, was of tremendous help to me. Had he not been with me then, I may not have put in my best. I left for Sandhurst in December 1954. Once there, I lost touch with him, except for the occasional letter or two.

Akhtar married the daughter of his maternal uncle, Abdul Rahman Khan. He took an early retirement, while he was Captain and serving as ADC to the President. He built a house in Rehana and settled there to begin a political career.

From the beginning of our respective political careers, Akhtar would contest the Provincial and I the National Assembly election. His presence in Haripur made up for my absence. His daily contact with the local people sustained my link to the constituency. When the 1977 general elections were announced, it was Akhtar and Zeb who campaigned on my behalf—I had been charged with Defence of Pakistan Rules instigating 'armed revolt against the state', and arrested in June 1976. He and Zeb were instrumental in my success.

On the morning of 13 June 1984, Akhtar came to see me in Abbottabad. We chatted for over an hour and at around noon he departed for the village. At 5 p.m. I received a call from Rehana telling me that he had passed away. The news came as a tremendous shock to me and I was unable to absorb it just then. His passing has left a void, a void which may never be filled.

## Naseem Aurangzeb

My younger sister, Naseem was born in 1939. She was the darling of the family, gentle, and beautiful, with long golden hair. When Akhtar and I joined the Burn Hall School, it was for boys only, but Father requested the priests to admit Naseem into the school. After she joined, a few more girls—mainly daughters of British instructors at Kakul and officers' daughters—also joined the school, but even then there were no more than twenty girls in total. Akhtar, Naseem, and I would walk the one-and-half mile route to school and back. We were very close and would often play together. Our friendship continued throughout our lives.

Naseem was married at an early age to Captain Miangul Aurangzeb, the *Waliahad* (heir apparent) of Swat, in 1955. Years later when Naseem asked for the hand of my second daughter, Zenab, for her elder son, Adnan, I happily agreed.

Mother seldom attended official receptions or functions when heads of state or foreign dignitaries visited Pakistan. On official and state visits abroad, Naseem would accompany Father as the First Lady of Pakistan. She knew how to carry herself and could socialize with people who were much older and more experienced than her.

Swat—which is where Naseem settled—was a well-run state, with a good law-and-order situation. Schools were present in abundance throughout the state, and there was even a college in Saidu Sharif. Naseem set up a girls' orphanage called Maskan in Saidu Sharif in September 1968. This and her social work kept her busy and close to the people. Since Aurangzeb was a member of the National Assembly and he and Naseem would come to Rawalpindi for the Assembly sessions, I would meet Naseem quite frequently. Her son, Adnan Aurangzeb, also became a member of the National Assembly.

## Shaukat Ayub Khan

My younger brother, Shaukat, was born in Abbottabad in 1940. He, like Akhtar, settled in Haripur after marrying Samina, the daughter of his maternal uncle, Abdul Rahman Khan, in November 1961. (Akhtar was married to Samina's sister.)

When Akhtar and I were contesting the 1977 elections, Shaukat's house became the hub of our campaigns. Under the most difficult conditions, he would boost the morale of the family and the workers. Every now and then he would get up and declare: 'We will win!'

Shaukat kept in reasonably good health and looked after himself. It was late evening on 30 October 1977 that I received a call from Shaukat's house in Haripur, telling me that he was not well and that his blood pressure had suddenly shot up. I immediately took a doctor over to his house, and after examining him, the doctor declared his condition to be temporarily stable. I had just returned from Shaukat's house when the telephone rang. He had passed away from a massive cardiac arrest. He was only 37 years old when he died.

Father had passed away on 20 April 1974, and Mother had still not recovered from the shock. I felt she would not be able to take another shock so soon—losing a son she loved so much, and that too while he was still so young. But she was a brave woman and bore it well, at least outwardly. We could see though, that grief was gnawing away at her from within.

Shaukat left behind a wife, three sons and one daughter. His son, Yousuf Ayub Khan, has remained a member of the NWFP Provincial Assembly and has twice been a minister in the provincial cabinet. Yousuf Ayub Khan is now the *nazim* (mayor) of Haripur.

### **Tahir Ayub Khan**

My youngest brother, Tahir Ayub Khan was born together with his twin brother Rashad, in Peshawar on 8 January 1944. Sadly, Rashad died just three days later.

I became very close to Tahir when he was sent to the Burn Hall School in Abbottabad. He stayed with me in the officers' mess at Westridge for a few months before going off to Cambridge. We had a great time hunting—in fact, he turned out to be a better shot than Father! After completing his O levels in Cambridge, he went to Cambridge University in the UK. Upon returning to Pakistan, he set up a business in Rawalpindi.

Tahir is married to Qudsia, the daughter of late Major General Shaukat Ali Shah. He now has two daughters and a son.

### **Jamila Amirzeb**

My second sister, Jamila, was born in Rehana on 17 February 1945. She received her basic education from the Station School in Rawalpindi. Father would encourage her to sing, as she had a lovely voice.

Jamila married Miangul Amirzeb of Swat—the younger brother of Miangul Aurangzeb who was the *Waliahad* of Swat at the time. Jamila's husband became a member of the National and the Provincial Assembly. He died on 5 December 1993, leaving behind Jamila, two sons and a daughter. Jamila now lives in Saidu Sharif, Swat, where she feels very much at home. Her son Asfandiyar, like his father, became a provincial minister and the *nazim* of Swat.

### **Shakila Najibullah**

Shakila is the youngest in the family, born on 2 August 1947, in Dehra Dun. Being the baby of the family, she was thoroughly spoiled by all of us. She attended the Station School along with her two older sisters, and later married a cousin, Captain (retd) Najibullah Khan, and settled in Haripur. Her husband passed away on 29 November 1977, leaving her with two sons and a daughter.

# 10

## BUILDING THE ARMED FORCES

ON 10 MAY 1857, the 3 Light Cavalry Regiment rose against the British in Meerut after some of their *sardars* and *sowars* had been punished and sent to jail. The 3 Light Cavalry was a Muslim regiment commanded by British officers from the East India Company. The regiment killed many of the British officers, freed the *sardars* and *sowars*, and galloped to Delhi where Bahadur Shah Zafar saw them cross the boat bridge over the Jumna River early in the morning. They entered the Red Fort and presented themselves before the emperor, who was at the time a mere pensioner of the British. Bahadur Shah Zafar, frail in mind and body, was persuaded to accept them and declare himself the head of the First War of Independence (which the British term the 'Great Indian Sepoy Mutiny'). Bakht Khan Rohila, a *subedar* of the artillery was made Commander-in-Chief of the forces fighting to overthrow the British.

The War of Independence was crushed by the British with reinforcements sent from the Punjab and the Frontier. Muslims were blamed for the uprising. Bahadur Shah Zafar was tried for treason and he and his family were exiled to Burma, where he died a destitute man. He was buried in the corner of the house he lived in. It is a very simple mausoleum; I visited it along with Father when he paid a state visit to Burma in December 1960.

Following the uprising, the battalions and regiments which had fought against the British were disbanded. The East India Company ceased to exist and India was taken over by the Crown. The British Indian regiments were reorganized so that no

regiment or battalion could be comprised solely of Muslims, though there were regiments constituted wholly by Gurkhas, Sikhs, and Hindus. The British did not trust the Muslims because they assumed that the Muslims were bitter about having power taken away from them and would try to avenge their defeat or revolt.

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At Partition, Pakistan was awarded six infantry divisions and one armoured brigade. At the time, troops were returning from the Far East, North Africa and other theatres of war. The units given to Pakistan came in bits and pieces. No battalion or regiment came in whole; each was an amalgamation of different units. The equipment was worn out, the tank engines old and requiring overhaul. India possessed the rifles, the light machine guns, the ammunition factories, as well as the assembly plants for trucks, aircraft and the like. Apart from extensive training areas and some good cantonments, Pakistan had not been left with much.

The three service chiefs were British and quite a number of British officers were retained. The Pakistani officers were from the Kings Commission of Sandhurst and from the Indian Military Academy in Dehra Dun, and the short service commissioned officers were from various training schools. My father took over as Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army on 17 January 1951, from General Sir Douglas David Gracey.

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Father knew that India would confront Pakistan someday, and he wanted to prepare the army for this eventuality. Vehicles were in short supply at the time and whatever was allocated to a formation was immediately put on blocks, the batteries removed, and the double tyres on the rear axle of the trucks reduced to



one on each side. Only two vehicles were used in the early days: the CO's jeep and the Quartermaster's truck which would bring daily rations from the supply depot. The vehicles were used only for training. Even binoculars continued to remain in their original packing from the Second World War for fear of damage.

In 1951, India brought its army up to Pakistan's borders. Naturally, Pakistan had to do likewise. We called that time 'The Great Flap'. Even most of our tanks were not in running order. Such was the state of our equipment.

In September 1953, Father paid his first official visit to the US. He stayed on there for an additional fifteen days to lobby for American aid. He convinced the Americans that Pakistan would be a strong ally and agreed to help them contain the Soviet Union and stop the spread of communism. As a result, Pakistan received equipment which it could not otherwise afford. Airfields were extended and modernized, and new cantonments built. Tanks, guns, aircraft, ships and vehicles poured in. Officers were sent to the US for training and American training teams came to work in Pakistan as well. Pakistan also received thirty-seven Cessna T-37 jet trainers in the mid-1950s, and six Hercules C-130-Bs from the US in 1963. After the B-57 bombers arrived, the US sent two more RB-57s which were used for photo reconnaissance. (One was damaged during the 1965 war by an Indian ground-to-air missile. Both were returned to the US after the war.)

The British had manufactured a very large number of Bristol freighter transport planes with a high undercarriage for use in Burma and South East Asia in the Second World War. Eighty-one of these planes were palmed off on Pakistan; our airfields were littered with them, so much so that the PAF (Pakistan Air Force) officers started using these planes to take their families on joyrides.

Father raised the Special Service Group (SSG) in Cherat. He was very impressed with the exploits of Colonel Otto Skorzeny of the German army who had rescued Mussolini in a daring commando action, whisked him away from a mountain castle in a light aircraft, and presented him before Hitler the same afternoon. Father located Colonel Otto Skorzeny in Spain where the man was leading a retired life, and asked him to come to Pakistan to train the SSG. At the last moment, Father realised that the Americans would not be amenable to the idea of Skorzeny training the Pakistan SSG, particularly with American money and equipment. Lieutenant Colonel Abu Bakar Osman Mitha was then selected to train the SSG.

The larger objective of the SSG was to keep the Indian forward formations harassed, to get behind their positions, disrupt communications, attack convoys and take out specific targets. SSG personnel were to be dropped by parachute near forward Indian air bases to destroy Indian aircraft on the ground. The SSG also toyed with the idea of loading helicopters with artillery, flying them out up till a few miles from an Indian airfield, and harassing the Indian base by shelling it at night.

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The Indians initially had an edge over Pakistan in their heli-lift capability. Their helicopters were manufactured by them based on a French origin Alouette helicopter and named 'Cheetah', for its size was amongst the very few that could fly to heights above 20,000 feet. Pakistan was short of helicopters and none of them were capable of flying as high as 20,000 feet above sea level. We did look at an American helicopter which could go up to 24,000 feet, but we had to drop the idea since they cost nearly six million dollars each. In desperation, we purchased a few Soviet MI-8 helicopters of the same type as the Indians possessed. This helicopter could carry about twelve fully equipped soldiers.

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Most of the military equipment given by the United States came under the Mutual Defence Agreement. The Americans made sure that the quantum of equipment they provided to Pakistan did not prove a serious threat to India or upset the power balance between the two countries. One could tell that the Americans were eager in providing military assistance to Pakistan by the fact that the United States Military Aid Group was stationed next to the GHQ for closer co-ordination.

The Americans had agreed to give approximately 102 F-84 fighters to the Pakistan Air Force. Luckily, the base Commander at Peshawar, Wing Commander Nur Khan, persuaded Father not to accept the offer, as the F-84 was obsolete and no match for the Indian fighter aircraft. Father requested the Americans for the F-86F. The Americans were at first unreceptive but then agreed to give Pakistan the F-86F which, at lower heights, was far superior to the Indian Hunter Fighter.

As Commander-in-Chief, Father felt that in the event of a war with India, he would not want the Indian Air Force gathering just outside the range of the Pakistani fighters and then moving to their forward bases. Instead, Father was searching for a method by which the Indian Air Force could be dispersed, and wanted to acquire twenty-four light bombers for this purpose. The talks held with the Americans to discuss the acquisition of these bombers did not go smoothly. The Americans felt that a bomber was an offence weapon meant for hitting deep into India. The talks were inconclusive. A team comprising Father, Finance Minister Syed Amjad Ali, and Air Vice Marshal Asghar Khan, was constituted to go to England towards the end of April 1958. I accompanied the team as Father's ADC. The Air Vice Marshal and Syed Amjad Ali were sent from London to look at a French light bomber. The Air Vice Marshal flew the plane to test it out and negotiations were started with the French. All this interest in the French bomber was actually a ploy targeted at the Americans who felt we simply didn't have the budget to buy

these expensive bombers. And so we deliberately leaked our interest in the purchase of the French bombers to the press. It alarmed the Americans, and they sent us a message not to pursue the French bombers and visit Washington instead, to check out the F-100 fighter. We needed a bomber though, not a fighter. The mission proceeded to Washington and after some negotiations, Air Vice Marshal Asghar Khan was sent to a base close to Washington where the American B-57s were stationed. The Air Vice Marshal flew the B-57 for quite some hours and came back around dinner time. Father took him aside and asked him about the bomber. Asghar Khan replied that it was a good bomber and would serve our needs well; it was fast and could climb higher and carry a slightly heavier load than the Indian Canberra bomber. Asghar Khan also told Father that he had noticed rust along the root of the wings. Father asked him if the aircraft could fly nevertheless and Asghar Khan replied in the affirmative. Hence, the aircrafts were accepted and Pakistan managed to obtain twenty-four B-57 light bombers free of cost. The arrival of the B-57 in Pakistan was a boost to the morale of the air force.

When the Badaber communication base near Peshawar was being negotiated with the Americans, Father demanded that Pakistan be provided with twenty-four F-104 Star Fighters. The Americans made all kinds of excuses; saying that the Pakistani pilots would not be able to fly them, that their speed of over 1,400 miles per hour was such that they would find themselves in Indian airspace within seconds if they took off from Lahore, and in Afghan airspace when they took off from Peshawar. Father continued to insist on being given the F-104, and finally we were provided with twelve of these fighters. The Indian Air Force was thus put at a marked disadvantage due to the F-104's tremendous speed, the 81,000-foot ceiling, and the air-to-air Sidewinders mounted on it.

The F-104 was used during the 1965 war to intercept the Indian Canberra bombers that came at night. The night sight of

the F-104 had a range of just one mile, which was highly inadequate. A bicycle repair man in Karachi heard of this and offered to improve the night sight of the F-104. He was given a training sight to work with, and in no time he had increased the range substantially. All of the F-104 aircrafts were then remedied accordingly.

Some F-86F fighters were fitted with the Sidewinder air-to-air guided missiles. The Pakistan Air Force lost some fighter aircrafts due to target fascination. The pilots would take the aircraft very close to the fleeing Indian fighter to ensure that the missile went straight into the enemy's tail-pipe. As a result, the Pakistani pilots were not able to clear out of the range of the explosion, and the flying debris would damage the aircraft.

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The Americans imposed an embargo on aid and arms shipment in 1965. The setback from this embargo had to be overcome. Ninety F-86E fighter aircraft were bought from Germany for \$9 million, along with tons of spare parts and quite a number of brand new engines still in their original packing. (On paper they were shown to have been bought by Iran.) Some M-47 and M-48 tanks were also put up for sale by Germany in 1967 on an 'as is where is' basis. Two hundred reconditioned M-47s in excellent condition were being offered at \$10,000 apiece and the rest were being cleared out as scrap. The dollar at the time was valued at Rs3.72, so each tank cost only Rs37,200. The other six hundred M-47/M-48 tanks needed only minor repairs and could be restored to perfect condition using the spare parts that Germany was giving along with the tanks.

Father asked Major General Gul Hassan to have a look at the tanks. Major General Gul Hassan agreed that we could repair most of them in Pakistan, but was of the view that we should look instead at the German Leopard or French AMX-30 tanks. Father replied, 'Gul, you are not going to scare the Indians by the

price tag of the Leopard or AMX-30, or by the calibre of their guns. You have to shoot first, Gul, and shoot straight.' In the end, the M-47/M-48 tanks being offered by the Germans were never brought to Pakistan.

The M47/48 tanks that had been given by the US performed well during the 1965 war, but these tanks had petrol engines and the tank could catch fire if hit. The range and endurance was also restricted. It was decided to retrofit these tanks with diesel engines to increase the operating range on their fuel tanks to 500 kilometres and to reduce the risk of the tank catching fire upon being hit. For this purpose three engines were considered—a General Motor multi-fuel 12-cylinder type GM-12V71T developing 750 horsepower; an 8-cylinder, type-8V71T developing 450 horsepower for the old Sherman tanks; and a Continental diesel engine of the US Army developing 750 horsepower which was retrofitted to the American Army M-48s. An army having M-60 tanks would certainly opt for the Continental engine so as to have common parts for their fleet of M-47/M-48s.

The Continental retrofit required various modifications to be made. The engine hull-walls had to be built up by twelve inches to fit the engine, increasing the weight of the tank by one ton. With a raised engine compartment, the gun could not be fully depressed to the rear, which created a blind area. The shock absorbers had to be changed for extra heavy duty ones which could take the extra one-ton load of the metal for the hull and the extra weight of the large engine. The Continental diesel engine would heat up easily and there was a danger that the engine might seize when the temperature gauge indicated red. The Continental team had falsified the temperature gauge fitted in the tank to show a lower temperature, but the army team conducting the trials was aware of the tampering. This retrofit naturally increased the costs. Additionally, parts for the Continental engine would be difficult to obtain under the embargo. However, the GM engine fitted into the M-47/M-48

like a hand to a glove. Nothing more was required except a bigger fuel tank and extra ammunition racks. Moreover, the GM engine parts would be readily available as it was a commercial engine and thus not subject to embargo. The Pakistan Railways was using it in its railcars.

The GM retrofitted M-47 was tested in all conditions for 4,000 miles. The original equipment of the tank was replaced from time to time, but the engine continued to function without fault. The final test was to run it from Kharian to the No.2 workshop at Lalazar, Rawalpindi. The tank raced cross-country using the Jhelum Bridge and then the Nullahs of the Salt Range to get to its destination. After such a successful trial run, I tried to have the Pakistan Army tank fleet retrofitted, but in vain. Other considerations triumphed.

The Shah of Iran too decided to retrofit the Iranian M-47/M-48 tanks with the Continental engine under American prodding. A facility was created in Iran especially for the purpose. The Shah agreed to finance the retrofit of Pakistani M-47/M-48 tanks in Iran, so quite a number of our tanks were sent over to them. After the overthrow of the Shah, these tanks were not returned to Pakistan but used during the Iran-Iraq war in which most of them were destroyed.

A Sherman M-4A1 was retrofitted with a type-8V71T multi-fuel engine, but the original manual transmission was retained in order to lower the cost as much as possible. This engine performed very well, but the Risaldar testing the Sherman M-4A1 was, it seems, instructed to fail the engine. During the test in the Cholistan desert, he would race the tank up over the sand dunes without changing gears as if to ensure that he broke the crankshaft, which he eventually did. The senior officers concerned were in no mood to upgrade their existing tanks. A new 105mm gun could be mounted on the M-47/M-48s and their 90mm guns on the Shermans and M-24 tanks. Such tanks could be later kept in reserve—(upon arrival of new tanks)—and could also be used

in the event of a war (as the Sherman tanks were, in 1965). In Pakistan's situation, no tank is totally obsolete.

After the 1965 war, however, it became evident that the M-47 and M-48 tanks were too heavy for the Punjab terrain; they slowed down significantly in the irrigated fields. We thought of seeking out a lighter tank with a heavy gun. However, we also saw what had happened in the case of the AMX-13, a very light tank which was being used by the Indians: the armour simply broke upon encountering artillery fire.

The introduction of the Chinese T-59 with a 100mm gun was used as something of a stopgap arrangement for the Pakistan army tank units. All the T-59s we received from China were brand new. The Chinese also sent us a regiment of approximately eighty Russian T-85s which they re-conditioned for us on our request. The Chinese F-6 jet fighter was actually the Russian MIG-19 manufactured by the former using reverse engineering. The F-6 fighter was a useful addition to the PAF. It had 30mm cannons which were perfect for attacking tanks, and when all cannons were fired it would seem as if the plane had come to a standstill in the air. The F-6s were improved by the PAF by putting in a Martin Baker ejection seat, improving the gun sight, installing a drop-tank under the fuselage, and fitting it with Sidewinder missiles.

By the mid-1980s, the NATO forces—and particularly the US—had stored away their M-60 tanks. Eight hundred of these tanks were offered to Pakistan for free, on the condition that we pay for the freight. The concerned officers thought that accepting the offer would adversely affect the development of our own tank, the *Al-Khalid*. They delayed the decision so the tanks were offered to Egypt, who gladly accepted them. After some time, Pakistan embarked once more on a hunt for tanks and fighter aircraft.

The PAF decided to opt for the Swedish aircraft Viggen, and a proposal for its purchase was put to the government towards the end of 1965. Father sent the proposal back with the



observation that there were only about thirty-six Viggens in Sweden, and that if we acquired these aircraft we would not be able to upgrade them. Further, he argued, they were not battle tested, and under the embargo spare parts would not be available, even on the black market. The PAF was directed to look for fighters present in the country of their origin, and also to ensure that the engine being used was purchased from and also in use in the country of manufacture, and in air forces around the world. He emphasized the importance of ensuring that the aircraft had been battle tested.

Eventually, the French Mirage was chosen. In the initial order, twelve Mirage-IIIs were purchased for approximately \$3 million a piece. (Zulfikar Ali Bhutto seemed to have a financial interest in this order. The Pakistani agent in charge of the sale may possibly have refused to pay Bhutto's share of the commission, for the agent was hounded and fled the country when Bhutto came to power.) Today, Pakistan has the largest Mirage fleet in the world. The PAF picked up Mirages from Australia along with their spare parts worth millions of dollars. These aircraft were rebuilt in Pakistan and the spares have also been used to rebuild and overhaul foreign Mirages. Nearly thirty-five Mirage-III and Mirage-Vs were bought from France, fully refurbished and upgraded.

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There had been, before the 1965 war, a perception in Pakistan that we should hold ground using firepower. In accordance with this mindset, Pakistan opted to manufacture the German G-3 fully-automatic rifle with a fire rate of approximately 600 rounds a minute, as well as the German MG-42 with a rate of 1,200 rounds a minute. The Pakistani rifle had more firepower than the Indian machine gun. The introduction of the 9mm sub-machine gun, the MP-5, was again a tremendous improvement on the Indian Sterling 9mm sub-machine gun of Second World War vintage.

Pakistan's lone submarine *Ghazi* bottled up the Indian Navy in its port for most of the duration of the 1965 war. It waited for the Indian aircraft carrier *Vikrant* to come out of Bombay, but *Vikrant* never left port. Since the Pakistani fleet did not encounter the Indian Navy, they expended their ammunition on Dawarka rather than bringing it back to Karachi.

In 1966, three Daphne class submarines were bought from France to keep the Indian Navy dispersed and sink its prime targets. Father felt that the navy must move in with missiles on their frigates and destroyers. A Russian delegation came to Pakistan in 1967 and surveyed the ships. The delegation suggested that some guns from the ships be removed and missiles put in their stead. The Pakistani naval officers just could not imagine a naval battle without broadsides being delivered by their guns in the Nelson manner. This got us nowhere. The Pakistan Navy ships remained without ship-to-ship missiles even during the 1971 war.

The Russians had offered eight Ossa class missile boats to Pakistan. Long debates ensued on the question of whether the missile boats should have two launchers mounted on them or four. The navy also objected that the Ossa class missile boats would not be stable enough to operate smoothly on the high seas during the monsoons. Basically, the senior naval officers wanted frigates and destroyers, not small boats. Maybe what inspired the navy to take such decisions was the thought that visiting a foreign port in a destroyer looks more impressive. What they did not realize was the destruction these missile boats could cause was considerable, as had been proven when an Egyptian Ossa missile boat sank the Israeli destroyer *Eliat*. Following Pakistan's rejection of their offer, the Russians gave the Ossa class missile boats to India. In December 1971, India used these very missile boats to sink the Pakistan navy destroyer *Khyber*.

The navy was very keen to acquire three brand new British Type-23 frigates at a cost of \$1.5 billion. Type-23 frigates were not being used by any other navy. Before a decision was taken on the matter, the navy went ahead and purchased equipment worth \$90 million for 'ships' that were nowhere in sight of being purchased.

I opposed the purchase of the Type-23s in the National Assembly. I felt we could not afford these frigates and also that they would be prime targets in the event of war with India. The Indian Jaguar or Mirage-2000 fighters using laser-guided bombs or missiles could sink these frigates without interference, as the PAF would not be in a position to spare fighters for the navy's protection in the initial days of war.

The Prime Minister included me in the Defence Committee of the National Assembly and the Senate, and sent us to Karachi to be briefed by the navy on the Type-23 frigates. The navy took us out to sea on the PNS destroyer *Shah Jahan*, and there was a heated discussion with the naval top brass. We were taken ashore to the command centre and again a detailed briefing was given by Vice Admiral Mansoor-ul-Haq showing how these three Type-23s would be used for escort duty from the Gulf and the Red Sea. I asked them to consider a situation in which these ships were attacked by laser-guided bombs or guided missiles carried by Jaguar or Mirage fighters. How would the frigates be saved without air cover—and with the ships' own surface-to-air missiles reaching a height of only 12,000 feet? Silence.

At this point, Admiral Iftikhar Ahmad Sirohey got annoyed and started to shout, saying that it was the navy that was entitled to make the decision, not the Committee. I told the Admiral not to shout as I could shout louder. I then asked him about the state of the navy's reserves which annoyed him even more, and he refused to answer. I told him that we should know what the reserve status was before spending another \$1.5 billion. Finally he confessed that the navy's reserves of ammunition etc., were sufficient only to cover one day of fighting! Needless to say, I was

shocked out of my wits. I told the Admiral to build up the reserves instead of wasting \$1.5 billion from their already limited budget. The Defence Committee approved the purchase. I was the only member who opposed it till the end.

In 1987, a delegation was sent to Washington by General Ziaul Haq to lobby against the sanctions imposed on Pakistan. The delegation met Assistant Secretary of Defence Richard Armitage. After the talks were over, I was asked to stay back for a personal meeting with Armitage. In that meeting I asked Armitage to help us save the \$1.5 billion by leasing a few US frigates to Pakistan. He was very sympathetic, and agreed. The Pakistan Navy thus received nine US frigates leased to them.

My meeting with Richard Armitage raised a few eyebrows in Pakistan. I spoke to Prime Minister Junejo candidly about the meeting and recommended to him that we not buy the Type-23 frigates. When Admiral Sirohey met the Prime Minister and asked for permission to go ahead with the purchase of these frigates, the Prime Minister—God bless him!—told the Admiral, 'Baba, I do not have the money for these frigates.'

And that was that.

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Except for supplying the spare parts for American equipment, the West slowly began to lose its hold on the weapons' market in Pakistan after the end of the Cold War. Meanwhile, China became a reliable supplier of military equipment for the army and air force. The Chinese translated all of their training manuals into English. They also helped to establish rebuild-plants for the T-59 tanks and the Chinese F-6 fighter in Pakistan.

The *Al-Khalid* tank was developed using a basic Chinese design. The tank was initially fitted with a marine diesel engine which proved unsuccessful, so it was then refitted with a Perkins diesel engine. However, the Perkins engine did not perform either. Soon afterwards, we purchased the T-80 tank from

Ukraine and the *Al-Khalid* was also fitted with the Ukrainian engine developing 1,200 horse power.

The American ambassador, Mr Robert Oakley came to see me once when I was Speaker to tell me that some American officers had gone for a firing demonstration on the *Al-Khalid*, and that the shots had gone through the hull and the turret. I jokingly told him that the hull and turret were deliberately designed to serve a dual purpose: to save the tank when hit, and also to provide ventilation holes during battle conditions when smoke gathers in the hull (if the hatch is closed). The ambassador was obviously surprised at my statement and didn't get the joke. Ironically, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had given Rs50 lakh to Heavy Industries in Taxila for its good work in developing the *Al-Khalid*. The *Al-Khalid* has since been developed as one of the top-of-the-line tanks.

The Karakoram jet trainer was manufactured jointly with China in the early 1980s. Eight of these trainers were delivered to Pakistan after the T-33 American jet trainers were withdrawn by the Americans. Pakistan has even been able to export a few of these aircraft. Next in line was the Super Sabre, also called the F-7, again developed in collaboration with the Chinese. The plan for the F-7 was basically to enlarge the existing airframe of the MIG-21 so as to fit it with an American engine. In 1987, it would have cost \$12 million a piece to produce the F-7, as quoted by the American firm Grumman. A stripped down F-16 could be had for approximately \$13 million. The F-7 fighter would serve as a stopgap arrangement till a top-of-the-line fighter could be acquired. However, the Americans opted out of this project. I told Grumman that the Super Sabre had to be in the range of \$5.5 million a piece: \$1 million for the Chinese airframe, \$3 million for the American engine, and \$1.5 million for the avionics, radars, etc. But this project too was dropped.

Pakistan and China have developed the JF-17 Thunder with a Russian engine and avionics suggested by the PAF. This is a good aircraft.

In 1987, the Americans were willing to sell the Hawk Eye twin-engine surveillance aircraft to Pakistan, but the PAF was insisting on the AWAC (Airborne Warning and Control) system built around the 707 Boeing, which the Americans were not prepared to give us. The Hawk Eye would have been a good alternative but we let the opportunity slip away.

Due to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Americans sold us M-48 tanks, 155mm self-propelled guns and M-113 armoured personal carriers, but they were reluctant to give us the F-16 fighter jet. They wanted to give us the American F-5 Freedom Fighter instead, which was a small, agile fighter, but came nowhere close to an F-16. An American air force general had come close to sealing an agreement for the delivery of the F-5 Freedom Fighter, but luckily, just before finalizing things, General Ziaul Haq called up Air Marshal Anwar Shamim, the Pakistani Air Chief, who flatly refused to receive the F-5s. General Ziaul Haq handed the telephone to the American general and Air Marshal Anwar Shamim told him once more that we required the F-16, not the F-5. The Americans finally agreed to provide us the F-16s, the first batch of which arrived in early 1983.

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Starting from where we did in 1947, building the armed forces of Pakistan was, needless to say, an uphill task. But now, after many years of hard work and dedication, we can be proud of our armed forces.

# 11

## 1965 ELECTIONS, OPERATIONS GIBRALTAR AND GRAND SLAM

IN 1962, FATHER was the President of Pakistan and his younger brother, Sardar Bahadur Khan, leader of the opposition. A dispute between them had occurred seven years earlier when Father broke with family tradition by allowing his children to marry outside the family. Sardar Bahadur Khan stopped speaking to him after that, much to the embarrassment of my grandmother.

In mid-1964, Father called me from Karachi and said that the situation—with his brother as leader of the opposition—could not continue. In order to put a stop to this, he told me, I would have to fight the 1965 general election against my uncle. Fighting an election from Hazara meant doing business long distance. I suggested to Father that Akhtar would be a more suitable candidate since he was living in Rehana, was keen on local politics and the people liked him. Father considered my suggestion, but then concluded: 'Like it or not, you will have to contest the election. On occasion, one has to do things for one's parents which one may not fully agree with or like.'

And so I ended up contesting the 1965 National Assembly elections mainly to keep my uncle from being elected and becoming the leader of the opposition.

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Presidential elections were held first, at the end of December 1964. It was a close call between Father and Miss Fatima Jinnah.

Despite having the support of important urban centres like Karachi, Dhaka, and Chittagong, Miss Fatima Jinnah was defeated.

The Pakistan (Convention) Muslim League in Karachi organized a procession to celebrate Father's victory, even though the people of Karachi had voted largely for Miss Jinnah. The workers and supporters took me from my house in PECHS to the polo ground from where the procession was to start. I was not aware of the route of the procession except that it would go to the Quaid's mausoleum, offer *fateha* and then disperse. Smaller processions were taking place in other localities. Unfortunately, these smaller processions got into fights which became quite violent, resulting in fatalities on both sides. It was a disgrace that such ugly incidents took place on the occasion, and that precious lives were lost because of a local party member. These clashes left me very disturbed, particularly when I was trying my best to protect and further the interest of the refugee population, whose continued contribution to the industrial and commercial development of Pakistan has to be commended. I deeply regret this incident took place.

The opposition parties accused the government of rigging the elections but failed to take a single case to the election commission or to the courts. If they did not trust the government then they should have boycotted the general elections that were to follow! But not a single opposition leader boycotted the March 1965 general elections. Neither did Miss Fatima Jinnah call for a boycott.

I joined the Pakistan Muslim League in August 1964. In March 1965, I moved to Haripur from Karachi to start my election campaign. My campaign entailed contacting the Basic Democrats of the Haripur and Abbottabad districts (which were one constituency at the time). I was totally new to the area and did not even know where to begin. Luckily, Mr Innayat-ur-Rehman (a member of the provincial assembly) came to my rescue and arranged small meetings for me in various villages. I was



impressed with the authority and conviction with which he delivered his speeches. I, on the other hand, knew how to conduct an exercise or a lecture in the army, but found public speaking to be an entirely different kettle of fish. Without Mr Innayat-ur-Rehman, I would have been lost.

As it turned out, my uncle decided to drop out of the elections. A distant maternal uncle, Mehdi Zaman Khan of Khalabat, was put up as the opposing candidate.

On 17 February 1965, just as I was about to file my nomination papers, I received news that my father-in-law and mother-in-law had had a terrible accident near Burhan while travelling from Peshawar to Rawalpindi. My mother-in-law had died on the spot due to whiplash and my father-in-law had injured his ribcage badly. After filing the nomination papers, I rushed to Peshawar to attend the funeral, and was joined by Zeb who had come from Karachi. I had been very close to my mother-in-law and I felt a deep sense of loss at her death.

I won the elections, however, and became a member of the National Assembly (MNA) with the highest number of votes nationwide that any candidate for the National Assembly had received. Upon my victory, Father said to me, 'Gohar, here's a piece of advice: in life, show patience and you will surely reap its benefits.'

## **A Backdrop to the 1965 War**

On 21 October 1947, tribesmen from NWFP and other volunteers entered Muzaffarabad. Earlier the Sudhan Muslim soldiers (from the Poonch area)—killed the Dogra officers and *jawans* of the 4 Jammu and Kashmir Infantry Battalion and captured the bridges over the Krishanganga and Jhelum rivers. Pakistan should immediately have sent its regular troops into Srinagar. The document of accession to India, purportedly signed on 26 October 1947 by the Maharaja, was fraudulent. India

simply used it as a pretence and sent in its regular troops by air to Srinagar on the morning of 27 October 1947. The extent of Indian military build-up and mustering of aircraft around Delhi leading up to that day seemed to have escaped the notice of the Pakistan High Commission in Delhi.

When the Quaid-i-Azam ordered General Sir Douglas Gracey—the acting C-in-C of Pakistan Army—to send troops into Kashmir, he refused to do so saying that his immediate boss was Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, who was the Supreme Commander of both the Indian and Pakistan armies. The British officers did not want to fight each other and Field Marshal Auchinleck had given the three service chiefs in India and Pakistan an order to stand down and for all British officers in both the Pakistan and Indian armies to be withdrawn in the event of a war over Kashmir.

When the Indians arrived in Srinagar on 27 October 1947, no British officer was withdrawn from the Indian Army. It is unfortunate that the Pakistan cabinet had to withhold from sending troops into Kashmir, largely due to the intervention of Field Marshal Auchinleck. Pakistan should have gone ahead and sent troops into Kashmir; it should not have mattered if the British officers were withdrawn. Moments and opportunities have to be grasped. What good were the British officers to the Pakistan armed forces when India was pumping nearly 40,000 troops into Jammu and Kashmir? Pakistan finally had to deploy its regular troops in Jammu and Kashmir when the Indian forces were pushing the tribesmen and volunteers back into Pakistan.

The UN Security Council then called for a ceasefire, which took effect at midnight of 1 January 1949 and was confirmed at an India-Pakistan Military Conference in New Delhi on 15 January 1949.

Father took over command of the Pakistan Army in January 1951. There was talk in some quarters that he had purchased the Indian Army's operational plans from an Indian Brigadier, and I asked Father if this was true. Father replied in the affirmative, and told me that he had directed that the Indian Directorate of Military Operations be penetrated. Detailed offence and defence operational plans of the Indian Army had been obtained from a Brigadier who had won a Military Cross on 22 February 1942 in Burma and was serving in the Directorate. He rose to the highest rank in the Indian Army. The Brigadier's wife canned fruit and vegetables in their home, for which she needed machinery. Rs 20,000 were given to the Indian Brigadier by our military attaché in London for the purchase of the machinery. The generals in the GHQ were taken aback at the level of detail present in the plans, and began suspecting that these plans were false and had been given to us as a ploy. However, further checks in New Delhi confirmed the plans to be authentic.

The main feature of the offence plan showed that the 1 Indian Armoured Division would attack down from Samba to cut the Grand Trunk Road between Wazirabad and Gujranwala. The defence plan exposed an area which was thinly protected by the Indians, an ideal target for our strike force to attack.

Father continued to receive defence plans of India. Apart from the above, Father noted in his diary dated 16 July 1968:

...[The Director Military Intelligence Maj.-Gen.] Akbar also showed me a copy of the offensive plan of the 1st Indian Corps against West Pakistan. It has been marked out in great detail, right down to the battalion, especially the crossings and bridges over the Ravi. To exploit success, an Infantry Division and an Armoured Brigade has been earmarked as reserve to this Corps. I congratulated him for this very great achievement. Getting to know the enemy's plan in advance is rare good fortune and can be a great contributory factor to success.

## The Rann of Kutch Dispute

The Rann of Kutch dispute began in January 1965, with the Indians moving their border security forces forward into the Rann. The Rann of Kutch was an undemarcated area, of which Pakistan was claiming only 350 square miles out of a total of 8,400 square miles. In March 1965, the Indians moved an infantry brigade into the area and then in April, Indian troops opened fire on the Pakistani posts there and began building their bunkers. These bunkers were successfully cleared by the Pakistan Army. In the beginning M-4A1 Sherman tanks were used for the attack but they proved ineffective in the desert. The Shermans were then replaced with M-47 Patton tanks, which the Americans objected to, because they did not want the Pakistan Army to use military equipment that had been provided by them. Father made no bones about telling them that American equipment had not been obtained for mere display or parades or Independence Day decoration; the equipment would be used for the purpose for which it had been obtained—that is, for the defence of Pakistan.

Air Marshal Asghar Khan was not on good terms with the C-in-C, General Mohammad Musa. When the Rann of Kutch dispute began, Air Marshal Asghar Khan sent a message to his counterpart in India, Air Marshal Arjan Singh, to tell him that this dispute was an army affair and the air forces of both countries should stay out of it. The Indian Air Marshal agreed. (C.P. Srivastava discusses this incident in more detail in his book, *A Life of Truth in Politics*). Asghar Khan's appointment as the chairman of Pakistan International Airlines was announced in April 1965, and Air Marshal Nur Khan took over as Air Chief end of July 1965. A lone Indian Ouragan fighter entered Pakistani air space on 24 April 1965. Two F-86F fighters scrambled from Mauripur to intercept it. When contacted, the Indian pilot lowered its undercarriage and made an emergency landing. The pilot was captured. No further escalation took place.

## Operations Gibraltar and Grand Slam

Pakistan's military success in the Rann of Kutch encouraged the Pakistan government to revive international interest in the Kashmir dispute. To bring the issue back into the international community's attention, Pakistani troops on the ceasefire line engaged the Indians on a daily basis and kept score of the number of casualties they inflicted on the Indian troops. These reports were highly exaggerated and played up in the national media to give people the impression that the Indians were cowards and had no stomach for war.

When the Kashmiri leadership was contacted for support, their response was quite discouraging. They claimed that the Kashmiri people were apprehensive about helping the Pakistani Mujahideen or raising a force of local fighters, as they feared that if Pakistan left them in the lurch, they would have to face the wrath of the Indian military and the pro-Indian government in Srinagar. However, they said that if Pakistan succeeded by using Mujahideen from outside the state, they would eventually be with Pakistan. But the report sent by Bhutto—as Foreign Minister and the head of the Kashmir cell—claimed that the Kashmiri people were ready for an uprising and only needed support from Pakistan. Based on that report, Operation Gibraltar was launched. The objective of Operation Gibraltar was to inject Mujahideen into Indian-held Kashmir so as to foster a popular uprising against India, thereby getting the international community to intervene and force India to start negotiations.

Father went to Murree to discuss the final preparations for the launch of the operation. He attended a post-dinner briefing in the lawn outside the 12 Division Mess about Operation Gibraltar, which had been prepared by Major General Akhtar Hussain Malik, the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the 12 Division, which was the division responsible for the defence of the entire ceasefire line along Azad Kashmir. Major General Akhtar Hussain Malik spoke briefly on the logistics of the

operation, the strength of the Mujahideen, and identified various entry points for the infiltration of the Mujahideen which was to start officially on 8 August 1965. However, the infiltration of some Mujahideen started on 5 August 1965.

Nearly four thousand Mujahideen were trained and sent into Indian-held Kashmir in early August 1965. Once there, they disrupted communications and attacked isolated posts. This was done mostly without local support. Local support existed mainly in four districts of Jammu, where in some places they hoisted the Pakistan flag. The shortage of food and ammunition, however, continued to be a source of trouble for the Mujahideen.

Indian troops quickly moved in to close the entry points of the Mujahideen. They began hunting down the Mujahideen, killed some of them and captured quite a few. Major General Akhtar Hussain Malik had not properly planned the exit routes for the Mujahideen. To make the situation more critical, on 26 August, the Indians captured the Pir Sahaba Pass. (Had they managed to push any further, Muzaffarabad would have been exposed). Two days later, they took the Haji Pir Pass. Operation Gibraltar was now in its death throes.

Whilst Operation Gibraltar was being carried out, the Pakistan Army remained in their cantonments and was not sent to their operational areas. This possibly was done to send a signal that activities were restricted to Occupied Kashmir. Further that the Indian Army should not move to the border in response to the Pakistan Army's move forward.

In response to the increasing threat, Operation Grand Slam was launched on 31 August, according to which pressure along the line of control was to be reduced and the advance on Muzaffarabad checked by capturing Chhamb-Jaurian and threatening Akhnoor. The attack in the Chhamb-Jaurian sector, using a regiment of seventy-two M-47 tanks and nearly fifty guns and heavy mortars, was intended to push the Indians across the river Tawi. However, on 1 September, the Indian Air Force attacked the advancing Pakistani troops. The Pakistan Air Force

swung into action and four Indian fighters were shot down. This prompted the Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri to announce that 'there would be difficult days ahead,' and made it clear that the war was going to escalate.

Realizing that a war was imminent, on 6 September Father told the Governor of East Pakistan, Monem Khan, that he must call a gathering of all political leaders and ask for their support. Various leaders came to see Monem Khan; among them were Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Maulvi Farid Ahmad. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman told the Governor that the time was ripe for 'a unilateral declaration of independence.'

The Indian Army slowed the Pakistani advance in the Chhamb-Jaurian sector by 2 September 1965, just two days after it had begun. It was clear that the advancing Pakistani formations were overstretched. Besides, a more intense Indian threat was looming dangerously on the international border, coercing Pakistan to stop its advance on Akhnoor. Thus, the Pakistan Army withdrew its artillery and troops, and sent them to their originally designated areas of operation.

But the conflict wasn't over yet; there was more to come. The war was officially about to start.

Altaf Gauhar in his book *Ayub Khan: Pakistan's First Military Ruler* has given authentic details of Operation Grand Slam and change of command on pages 318-334. In a nutshell he says that the change of command was used by GHQ and the Foreign Office as a cover to hide their own incompetence and indiscretions. Both Bhutto and Musa had been guilty of grave errors of judgement, which they tried to conceal in a culpable and deceitful manner, and they relied on the Grand Slam myth to exonerate themselves from blame.

# 12

## THE WAR OF 1965

**INDIA ATTACKED PAKISTAN** in the early hours of 6 September 1965. At noon, Father went on radio to inform the public about the situation. I quote one section of his speech below:

The hour of trial for a hundred million people of Pakistan has struck. The Indian rulers were never reconciled to the establishment of an independent Pakistan where Muslims could build a homeland of their own. All their military preparations during the last eighteen years have been directed against us.

Now that the Indian rulers, with their customary cowardice and hypocrisy, have ordered their armies to march into the sacred territory of Pakistan, without a formal declaration of war, the time has come for us to give them a crushing reply which will put an end to India's adventure in imperialism....

The hundred millions of Pakistanis whose hearts beat with the sound of *la ilaha il Allah Muhammad ur rasul Allah* will not rest till India's guns are silenced forever. The Indian rulers do not yet realize what people they have taken on. Dedicated to the faith and convinced of the justice of their cause they will fight as one man in the name of God whose promise to mankind is that right shall triumph. A state of emergency has been declared. We are at war. Our brave soldiers have gone forward to repel the enemy.

We are invoking the United Nations Charter to exercise our inherent right of individual and collective self-defence recognised in Chapter VII of the Charter. My dear countrymen, in this hour of trial you have to remain absolutely calm. You must know that each one of you has to perform a supreme duty which demands complete dedication and devotion.



Be prepared to strike and strike hard; for the evil which has raised its head against your border is doomed to destruction. Go forward and meet the enemy. God is with you.

*Pakistan Paindabad.*

After Father had delivered his speech, the American ambassador, Walter P. McCaughy, came to see him and said, 'Mr President, the Indians have got you by the throat.'

'Any hands on Pakistan's throat will be cut off,' replied Father.

On 9 September 1965—three days after the war had begun—the American ambassador met Bhutto and informed him that the US had stopped all military supplies to both Pakistan and India. Two months earlier, the US had given Pakistan an aide-memoire stating that 'the United States reaffirms its previous assurances that it will come to Pakistan's assistance in the event of aggression from India against Pakistan.' (Altaf Gauhar, *Ayub Khan: Pakistan's First Military Ruler*, p. 337).

The US had reneged on their commitment.

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'That day, 6 September, I was flying from Karachi to Rawalpindi, totally unaware that the Indians had attacked. The flight departed at its scheduled time of 7 a.m., but half an hour later it returned to the Karachi airport. Passengers were asked to disembark and informed that the Indians had attacked us from the Lahore front and that their air force was attacking targets on the ground. At 11:30 a.m. an announcement was made saying that the flight would leave soon for Rawalpindi. Only a few passengers (including myself) stayed on at the airport. The flight took off at noon, staying close to the mountains of Balochistan and NWFP. In fact, it ended up being a rather uneventful flight to Islamabad.

Despite our willingness to do so, Akhtar and I could not rejoin our battalions because by then I was a member of the National Assembly and Akhtar a member of the Provincial Assembly. We would have been disqualified had we rejoined service.

Upon my arrival in Islamabad, I went to see Zulfikar Ali Bhutto at 9 p.m. to get an update on the situation. After talking to him for a few minutes, I happened to excuse myself to go to the washroom. I was taken to a room where I found—lying on the bed, inebriated—none other than Major General Akhtar Hussain Malik! He did not even attempt to get up when I entered the room, and though we exchanged greetings, I felt he had not recognized me. When I asked Bhutto why Major General Akhtar Hussain Malik was here instead of at his headquarters in Murree, Bhutto simply shrugged his shoulders.

The Pakistani intelligence operatives in India should have forewarned the Pakistani military of India's mobilization activities of their army. They did not do that, however, and as a result the Indian attack at the Lahore–Wagah border came as a surprise. Altaf Gauhar in his book *Ayub Khan's Pakistan: First Military Ruler* on page 336 states that the Pakistani High Commissioner in New Delhi sent a cypher message through the Turkish ambassador that India would attack Pakistan on 6 September 1965. It was received in the Foreign Office on 4 September 1965. It would later transpire that Bhutto and Aziz Ahmad decided to suppress the information. However, the fact that India would use the Amritsar–Lahore road whenever they attacked had been predicted much earlier. The defence on the BRB canal had been prepared years ago, as had bunkers and pill boxes. All formations of the 10 Division were familiar with the area, and they should have started moving to their assigned battle locations as soon as they received their orders on the evening of 4 September 1965. However, they were slow in taking up their positions.

The Indian division that attacked on the Wagah front did not have bridging equipment with them, so they could not bridge the BRB canal which had been blown up by Pakistani troops. Unable to advance, some Indian troops broke into the Bata shoe factory and looted it. General J.N. Chaudhuri's boast of 'having his whisky in the Gymkhana Club' could have materialized had it not been for the courageous efforts of officers like Major Raja Aziz Bhatti and many others who held their ground on the BRB canal, allowing the 10 Division to secure their positions. Major Aziz Bhatti was awarded the *Nishan-e-Haider* for the exemplary courage he displayed in that war.

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When the war began, the army abandoned the new concept of holding ground by firepower rather than manpower, and reverted to its old strategy of compact deployment to hold ground. Pakistan has the advantage of having its cantonments close to the border; troops can move into their operational areas very quickly. On the other hand, India has to bring its troops from central and southern India, which takes several days.

According to the plans purchased from the Indian Brigadier, the 1 Indian Armoured Division would launch its attack from Samba and try to cut off the GT road between Wazirabad and Gujranwala. When this division moved from Jhansi to take up its position in Samba, we lost sight of it for a few hours near Amritsar due to the thick dust being kicked up by the movement of Indian vehicles and troops. At this stage we began to worry that the Indians may have changed their plan of attack, but as luck would have it, an Indian dispatcher on a motorcycle carrying the attack plans was ambushed by the Special Services Group and killed. It was reconfirmed from the documents recovered from him that the 1 Indian Armoured Division was heading for Samba. The 6 Pakistani Armoured and 15 Infantry Division were waiting for it, knowing its direction of attack.

The Guides Cavalry and 27 Lancers were sent by train directly to the Sialkot sector. Both de-trained and went straight into battle. In the evening, when they were recovering knocked-out Indian tanks, they saw the emblem of the charging elephant on the tanks and then realized that they had not been fighting just any armoured regiment but the famous 1 Armoured Division of India. One of the captured Centurion tanks is placed prominently on display in Haripur.

When resources got low, the Pakistan Army used the practice ammunition it had saved up and put in reserve. Unaware were the Americans—who had supplied it as US aid—who believed that it had been used up during training. Iran and Turkey opened their stores to us and PIA planes brought in ammunition. Indonesia sent us missile-boats and a few light bombers.

The Pakistani 6 Armoured Division had been raised from the old Sherman tanks of Second World War vintage. The Americans had given us the Patton M-47/M-48 tanks on the condition that the Shermans would be scrapped. We did not scrap them; instead, we stored them in Golra Depot and other areas. These tanks—though simple and mounted only with 75mm and 76mm guns—proved to be fairly effective against the Indian Centurion tanks which were mounted with 105mm guns. After all, our crews had been handling Shermans since the Second World War.

On 7 September 1965, Pakistan launched its strike into Indian territory. The strike force could have moved speedily towards the Beas bridge, cutting four Indian divisions in East Punjab and three in Occupied Kashmir. However, fate intervened; a Pakistani tank hit the railing of a bridge and fell into the Rohi nullah. The bridge was slightly damaged and blocked. At that point only some tanks had crossed over; the majority of tanks were held up. The engineers had bridging equipment with them and should have repaired the bridge within two hours, but the task took longer than expected. Major General Sher Bahadur was sent from the GHQ by helicopter to get them across.

The strike force was kept in battle location since the Rann of Kutch operation. They should have known the Indian area ahead of them like the palm of their hand, which they did not bother to take advantage of. Father knew Pakistan could not fight a long war of attrition with India. It had to be short, and could only be done by outflanking the Indian Army. Father knew the Indian Army Chief, General J.N. Chaudhuri very well, as they had been together at Sandhurst. General Chaudhuri had certain predictable reactions to troop movement in the field and when the time came, he did not disappoint. General J.N. Chaudhuri recommended the withdrawal of Indian forces behind the Beas River. Lieutenant General Harbuksh Singh, who was commanding the Indian Corps, opposed the withdrawal on the grounds that the Pakistanis were not coming forward, and threw the 4 Indian Infantry Division in front of the Pakistan strike force, cutting the Madhupur canal and flooding the area. The 1 Pakistan Armoured Division was bogged down in the flooded area, and the strike ended up being a failure. Further offensives, other than a limited one in the desert, were not possible due to shortage of two infantry divisions. To have raised those two divisions would have cost Rs200 crores, a sum which we could not afford.

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The PAF was sent to destroy the MIG-21s which the Indians had brought up to Pathankot. Only one of their aircraft was destroyed. The Indians had put up air defence missiles at the Ambala air base. While Group Captain Najeebullah was flying his B-57 low over the Ambala air base, an Indian missile snipped the wing of the B-57. Despite being hit, Najeebullah was able to bring the aircraft back, for which he was later awarded the *Sitara-e-Jurat*. We attacked Ambala again with the B-57s and released bombs over the runway. The pilot saw that, although the bombs had hit the runway, they had ricocheted off the tarmac and hit a church about one mile from the air base. This is when the Indians said

that Pakistan was attacking churches. (Later, to remedy this, the bombs had a drag put on them so that they did not ricochet.)

An Indian Gnat fighter was forced down at Pasrur by an F-104. We used this Gnat after the war for training, as enemy aircraft. However, the plane had been hit by a bird and the canopy was damaged. At the time, Yugoslavia had numerous Gnats in its air force but we could not obtain it from them. Neither could we get one from Britain. As luck would have it, the Pakistani air attaché in London was at a gas station when an Englishman parked up next to him. Once they started talking, the attaché discovered that the Englishman had served in the Hindustan Aeronautical factory in Bangalore and worked on the Gnat aircraft. When the attaché told him that we were unable to source a canopy, he said this was not a problem at all. The canopy was taken out from the Indian factory and surreptitiously transported to Pakistan, and the captured Gnat was made flight-worthy again.

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Father, accompanied by Bhutto, was to secretly fly to China on 19/20 September 1965 to arrange for support and equipment from the Chinese. Father's staff flicked his bedroom lights on and off to signal that he was in the room. As soon as he had boarded the plane along with his team, an Indian air attack came forth onto the airfield. The plane's engines were kept running and as soon as the attack was over, the flight took off. Luckily, there was no damage to the runway or to any main buildings. Father's Military Secretary, Major General (retd) M. Rafi Khan is alive to tell the tale.

A Hawker Hunter of the Indian Air Force was shot down by ground fire. The pilot was the son of General Cariappa who had been a good friend of Father's. My mother and Akhtar went to see the young Cariappa in the CMH hospital in Rawalpindi, where he was recovering from the back injury he had sustained while ejecting from his damaged aircraft. General Cariappa was

informed of his son's well-being and on 22 January 1966, twenty-seven-year old Flight Lieutenant K.C. Cariappa was repatriated to India.

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Before the war began, the PIA flights going into Bombay would fly over the Indian port so as to locate the Indian aircraft carrier *Vikrant*. The Indian air traffic controllers in Bombay would scream at the PIA pilots for straying off course, but were unable to do much more than that. The Pakistani submarine *Ghazi* lay outside Bombay waiting for *Vikrant* to leave port so that it could be attacked and sunk. But *Vikrant* did not leave port.

The plan was to take the war to Bombay. We had planned to use all of our C-130s, which had been converted to carry twenty 1000-pound bombs. The C-130s had been used earlier as well, to bomb Indian Army forward formations at night. The B-57 bombers and C-130s were to bomb Bombay on the night of 23 September with incendiary bombs.

None of this materialized, however, because by then the ceasefire had come into force.

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The UN passed a resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire. There was mounting pressure on both India and Pakistan from the international community to stop the fighting. The two countries finally accepted the UN resolution, India signing first (on 15 September), and then Zulfikar Ali Bhutto signed it on 22 September. The ceasefire came into effect on midnight 23 September 1965.

Father was very disappointed that the opportunity to give India a crushing defeat was lost, despite having even their operational plans. Major General Naseer Ahmad, who had been commanding the 1 Armoured Division, told Major General

Abdul Hamid that he wanted to shoot himself. When Father heard of this, he said it would have been better if the man had done so. The failure of the Pakistani strike force and Father's efforts to strategically position his forces deprived Pakistan of a rare opportunity to inflict a defeat on the Indian Army.

Still, the Pakistan armed forces fought the 1965 war gallantly and against great odds. They proved that they could fight against an army over three times their size. The equipment used by the Pakistan Army was far superior to that of the Indians. The air force, too, though smaller than the Indian Air Force, had better aircraft. And the Indian Navy hardly left port.

The total number of Pakistani officers killed and wounded was 3,200. Tank losses were counted as 132 (of which some tanks were repaired). The PAF lost only 19 aircraft. The losses of the Indians were greater than those incurred by Pakistan. They lost 200 tanks and 35 aircraft; 2,763 of their personnel had been killed, another 8,444 wounded, and 1,507 had gone missing.

Many felt that the 1965 war should not have ended when it did. The media had been showing victory on all fronts, so naturally the public was taken aback when they heard that a ceasefire had been put in place. They did not know that the strike force had failed. The situation had become a stalemate. India continued to attack till 18 September on the Sialkot sector without success. The difference, however, was that India could produce equipment whereas Pakistan could not, and neither could we buy equipment from other countries since sanctions had been imposed on us. This factor would eventually have proved very dangerous for Pakistan; a battle of attrition was the last thing we could afford to engage in.

Father took full responsibility for the 1965 war, even though he had given the three service chiefs the freedom to take important decisions, both in times of peace and war. He had visualized building up the Pakistan Army by joining various treaty organizations like CENTO and SEATO, (the government had joined SEATO without the army being aware of it) to obtain



free military equipment and training. He had been of the view that a war with India should be avoided as far as possible to enable Pakistan to develop. The 1965 war spun out of control due to the mismanagement of the military operations in Occupied Kashmir which were being headed by Bhutto. The clash in the Rann of Kutch perhaps gave them the impression that India would not take the conflict to the international border due to Operation Gibraltar. Father's first response to any plan put to him concerning an operation in Occupied Kashmir was to question if the operation was likely to lead to open war. If the answer was yes, he would not approve the plan. The 1965 war was a war that Father would have avoided had he been directly conducting Operation Gibraltar and not depended on Bhutto, the Kashmir cell, and Major General Akhtar Hussain Malik's overambitious planning. Nowhere did he blame anyone and took full responsibility of the misadventures on himself.

Father noted in his diary dated 6 September 1966: 'Told the principal secretary to constitute a committee to determine the sequence of events leading to fighting in Kashmir and the Indian attack against Pakistan.'

# 13

## LEARNING THE ROPES

IN AUGUST 1966, I was part of a twelve-member delegation headed for China. It was led by the Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr Abdul Jabbar Khan (from East Pakistan), with six members each from the two wings of the country. Upon our arrival in Beijing, we were taken to the guest houses reserved for senior government officials. The streets were full of people, chanting, beating drums, and carrying banners. The Cultural Revolution was in full swing. At night we attended a banquet hosted by Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou En-lai. I asked Chairman Mao what was happening outside in the streets. He replied that the young generation did not know what they, the older generation, had gone through in the Long March, and that the youth had gone soft and needed to be shaken up with a revolution. I also asked him why the foreign media attacked and criticized China so. He laughed, looked towards Premier Zhou En-lai, and said that he was actually pleased when the foreign media criticized China because it meant that China was doing the right thing and taking actions that hurt powerful foreign governments. When China was praised for something in the foreign media, he said, he would immediately contact Premier Zhou En-lai to find out what wrong they had done to evoke the praise.

We discussed the 1965 war with Chairman Mao. He praised the Pakistan Army for standing up to India, a much bigger country, but he went on to say, 'Look, there are ten fingers, and if you stamp on all ten, they will be hurt, but they will become functional in a few minutes. However, if you were to simply cut

one finger off, everyone will know and see the loss. In the future, concentrate on a particular point of India's weakness and launch your attack to completely destroy that formation. You will soon find the rest of the Indian Army on the run, just as it ran before the Chinese Army in 1962.'

Chairman Mao asked me how many tanks India had. One thousand or so, I told him. If we had detailed twenty soldiers for each Indian tank, he remarked, and armed them with rocket-launchers and anti-tank rifle grenades, the Indian tanks would have been burning on the battlefield. At a later function in Beijing, I met the general who had commanded the Chinese troops when they defeated the Indians in the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA) in 1962. I asked him to tell me his plans and strategies. He referred me to Neville Maxwell's book *India's China War*. It is factual and accurate, he told me.

At the end of the banquet Premier Zhou En-lai asked me why I had come as part of such a large delegation. I told him that I was a member of the National Assembly and had been asked to come, so I had. He then extended me an invitation to come to China again, with just my wife next time, and be his guests. I had thought that his invitation was a mere pleasantry, but in April 1967, when Zeb and I were in London, I received a message from him asking when I was coming to Beijing next.

Zeb and I took him up on his invitation in May 1967. Upon our arrival in Beijing, we were presented with a large bouquet of flowers accompanied with a note from Premier Zhou En-lai in which he had sent greetings for my father's birthday, which was the following day on 14 May. (I myself had forgotten Father's birthday, in fact). Along with the flowers was an invitation to lunch, adding that the menu would consist of Father's favourite dishes.

At lunchtime, we were taken to the Great Hall of the People, where the Premier was waiting for us. To my surprise, nobody else had been invited, not even the officers from the Pakistani embassy. We sat and talked for a while, then moved to the table

for lunch. Lunch consisted of Peking duck and a delicious sauce. The Premier asked the waiter to bring us an extra jar of that sauce, saying that Father had liked it very much also.

I thanked the Premier for his continued support to Pakistan. Pakistan was only being charged the cost of the raw materials for the arms and equipment that they were supplying us. The equipment was brand new, all except a few Russian tanks which had been reconditioned. He then inquired as to why our foreign minister was visiting Moscow, Indonesia and Japan; he was under the impression that there was some discussion happening amongst these countries that related to China. I assured the Premier that it was not so and that the foreign minister had gone to Moscow to acquire military equipment which China could not supply (such as 130mm guns, etc.); he had gone to Indonesia to further cement diplomatic relations and to Japan for economic aid. I reaffirmed that Pakistan would never jeopardize its friendship with China, and if China were to supply all of the equipment we required, we would certainly stop looking elsewhere.

The Premier thanked me for being straightforward with him. There was a point during our conversation where Premier Zhou En-lai corrected the interpreter's English translation. I suggested continuing our talk in English, but he simply smiled and carried on in Chinese. His English was quite good but he would always speak in Chinese and use an interpreter, as all Chinese officials did.

The talks came around to Kashmir. The Premier said, 'Tell the President, Pakistan has to take Kashmir. China is ready to support Pakistan. We have troops on the north of Kashmir who are ready and could be used. Do not fire the first shot, and if you require Chinese troops for Kashmir, make a request in writing.' I was very encouraged by the Premier's message, and thanked him for his support and conveyed it to Father on my return.

'You should get the weapons you want from the Russians,' the Premier added, 'But be very careful as you will have difficulty in

getting spare parts on a regular basis.' He believed that the Russians were unreliable, quoting for me the example of the agreement between China and Russia to supply weapons to North Vietnam; Russia was to provide the weapons to China, and then China would be responsible for transporting them from their border with the USSR into North Vietnam. However, when the relations between these two countries deteriorated in 1960, the Russians sent China the bill for the arms sent to North Vietnam in addition to retracting all the blueprints of the joint projects under construction as well as recalling the technical staff. The Chinese diplomats wanted to discuss these issues with the Russians, particularly the issue of the arms' payment, but Mao ordered them to pay Moscow the entire sum they were asking for.

In those days, Premier Zhou En-lai was under pressure from the Red Guards. I asked him if the Cultural Revolution had affected him. He said that yes, he had been through a difficult period and sometimes they still made personal attacks on him based on accusations from the past. But, he said, the worst was over.

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In January 1967, I went to Dhaka to attend a session of the National Assembly. One weekend, I went to the Amrail tea estate for a tiger hunt in the Kalinga forest. Most of the tea planters and managers of the estates were either Scottish or West Pakistanis. Nadir Shah (who was from Nowshera) was a manager of one of the James Finlay tea estates. He invited me, along with some West Pakistani managers, for dinner. Towards the end of the evening, they asked me for my views on the situation prevailing in East Pakistan. I told them very frankly that I foresaw a situation like 1857 arising without warning one day, and that when it did, they should cross over into India and not attempt to go to Chittagong or Dhaka. 'You will be in an Indian jail for

three months,' I told them, 'After which you and your family will be sent to Pakistan. You run the risk of being killed if you attempt to go to Chittagong or Dhaka. It would be best if you start looking now for suitable jobs in West Pakistan and leave when the going is good. When things blow up here, jobs might not be easy to come by as there will be large numbers of West Pakistanis going back all at once.'

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Miss Fatima Jinnah died on 8 July 1967 in her sleep at her residence—the Mohatta Palace in Karachi. There was a very large funeral procession from her residence to the Quaid-i-Azam's mausoleum. The staunch supporters of Miss Jinnah wanted to bury her next to her brother, the Quaid. Father, however, strongly felt that the Quaid must be the only one buried in that mausoleum.

Instructions were given to bury Miss Fatima Jinnah near the graves of Liaquat Ali Khan and Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar. No sooner had the funeral procession entered the Quaid's mausoleum area then some people began to take Miss Jinnah's body towards the Quaid's grave. The Karachi administration had been instructed not to allow this. There was a rush towards the vehicle carrying the body and the police had to resort to firing tear-gas to disperse the crowd. The body was eventually taken to the area designated for the burial of important Pakistani leaders where people could give them due respect after first visiting the Quaid. Father wanted to keep the Quaid well above all other politicians and leaders.

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The construction of the Karakoram Highway was offered to the Chinese in 1968. This project brought in a large number of Chinese volunteers, mainly from Kashgar in China's Xinjiang

province. They did an excellent job. Before the Chinese became involved, Pakistani engineers had to be flown to Kashgar and then they would travel by truck to the Khunjerab Pass, all of which meant that progress on the construction was extremely slow. The demarcation of the international border between China and the Northern Areas had been made in a spirit of mutuality and friendship in 1963. The Chinese told the Pakistanis that they should demarcate their desired boundary on the ground, and they would then put up the boundary pillars. Pakistan followed the watershed for this.

There wasn't much to gain from taking the highway through the Kilik Pass, which was at an altitude of over 15,000 feet, as compared to taking the highway through the 16,000-foot Khunjerab Pass, but this was an important factor for the Chinese, as they wanted the Karakoram Highway to be as far from the Soviet frontier as possible.

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I accompanied Father abroad only once as a civilian and member of the National Assembly in August 1968, and that too at the insistence of his doctor, Lieutenant Colonel M.A.Z. Mohiuddin. According to him, Father was supposed to have a medical check-up in London after his talks with Prime Minister Harold Wilson. He added that it was possible that Father would have to have his heart operated upon, and in these circumstances it was necessary that a family member accompany him in case permission was needed for the surgery or in the event that, God forbid, the operation was unsuccessful. The doctors in London did a check-up and did not feel the need to recommend surgery. The British know-how was not advanced at that point in time and hardly anyone knew of open-heart surgery. They had seen it being performed during visits to the US hospitals and that too by looking through a glass in the door of an operation theatre.

An atmosphere of agitation was in the air during the latter part of 1968. Against this backdrop, the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Dr Mahbub ul Haq, raised for the first time in a Cabinet meeting the issue of twenty-two families controlling the wealth of Pakistan and branded them as robber barons. He proposed the redistribution of wealth. Father allowed him to speak for over an hour. Anyone would be willing to distribute wealth which was not one's own, Father said when Dr Mahbub ul Haq had finished speaking. At the moment, Father continued, we have only poverty to distribute. He advised Dr Mahbub ul Haq that for the next Cabinet meeting he should bring proposals for the creation of wealth instead. But before the next Cabinet meeting, Dr Mahbub ul Haq had left the country to take up a job with the World Bank.

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It was in the midst of meetings with the Democratic Action Committee—the umbrella organization of the opposition—in March 1969, that Marshal Grechko, the Deputy Defence Minister of the USSR, arrived in Rawalpindi and held his first meeting with Father. He promised to provide Pakistan with all kinds of weapons (except bombers). Grechko went on to visit other cities to discuss military and air force requirements, and returned to Rawalpindi on 13 March 1969 to attend a lunch convened by Father in his honour. Father noted his impressions of the Russians' visit in his diary:

Marshal [Andrei Antonovich] Grechko, the [Deputy] Defence Minister of the USSR, came, together with his team who are on a visit to lunch. He looks an imposing figure and a fine man with a lot of sense of humour. He wanted to speak to me separately. The burden of his talk was that the Soviet leadership was very concerned about the state of affairs in Pakistan, and especially about me. I, who had put the country together, given it recognition in the eyes of the world, why did I decide not to fight the next elections when the



armed forces and a vast majority of the people were behind me. I gave him my reasons. He asked if I could not change my mind. Did I need any help? Mr Kosygin was prepared to meet me anywhere and any time, openly or otherwise, if it would help my position. I thanked him and declined the offer as my mind about the future was made up. He showed disappointed.

This was an important meeting, and showed how the Soviet leadership had moved close to Father since his first state visit to the USSR in April 1965.

Pakistan was on the verge of a take-off stage. The achievements of Father's government were impressive but suffice to say that the rate of development was higher than in India, currency was stronger than India. Pakistan's exports were higher than all the present day Asian tiger countries put together.

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Being a member of the National Assembly was an excellent experience which allowed me to make good friends both from East and West Pakistan. The opposition began to say that Father was grooming me to take over from him. This was the last thing that he wanted, or indeed what I was looking for. At that time, the Constitution decreed that one had to be forty-five years old to be eligible for the office of President; in 1970, when the presidential elections were to be held, I would only be thirty-three years old.

# 14

## END OF AN ERA

IT IS POSSIBLE that Father's first attack of arrhythmia—a disturbance in the rhythm of the heartbeat—occurred when he was undergoing an intensive physical training course as Captain; he did mention that his heart had fluttered but that he had returned to feeling normal soon afterwards. The incident was repeated some time after the 1965 war. This time he saw a doctor, but the matter was closed soon thereafter. However, the doctor did express his concern about the possibility of an attack in different circumstances, such as when he was away on tour or hunting and far away from a medical facility.

Father suffered his first mild heart attack when he was hosting a banquet for King Hussein of Jordan who had come on an official visit to Pakistan. When the time came for Father to speak, he could not get up to deliver his speech. By the fourth week of January 1968, he had suffered a severe heart attack, and again on 3 February at about 6 a.m. he suffered a major heart attack and lost consciousness. He was about to be pronounced dead when his physician, Lieutenant Colonel M.A.Z. Mohiuddin, somehow revived him two hours later. When he regained consciousness, Father was groggy and he called for me and asked me to bring paper and pencil. He was dying, he said to me, and asked me to ensure that he was buried next to his mother in Rehana. Most of the instructions he gave me were all related to the family. He also asked me to call up his advisor, Fida Hussain; his brother, Sardar Bahadur Khan; the Governor of West Pakistan, General Mohammad Musa; General Yahya Khan and the Information Secretary, Mr Altaf Gauhar. They were to be told that he had

suffered a heart attack due to which he would not be able to perform his presidential duties, and in his absence the Speaker of the National Assembly was to be the Acting President.

However, General Yahya Khan's response, when I conveyed Father's message to him, was a flat-out rejection of the appointment of the Speaker of the National Assembly as President. General Yahya Khan immediately called a meeting at the GHQ of the personalities who had been summoned to the President's House, where he stressed that Father's illness was not to be announced as a heart attack, but since Father would not be seen in public or appear on television for some time, we would have to invent some other ailment as an excuse for his absence. After consulting Father's physician, we decided to announce that he had suffered from pulmonary embolism (a clot in the lungs). Once this announcement was made on public radio and television, rumours began to spread.

Father was confined to his bedroom in order to conceal his condition. However, all arrangements were made for his treatment at home. Professor Goodwin, a leading heart specialist, was called in from London. He came immediately and proved to be a source of support for the local doctors who were doing their best. Professor Goodwin approved the treatment being carried out with some modifications in the medications being administered.

Soon after the announcement of the embolism attack, Father actually had one. It was a severe attack, and very painful. The English doctor, after doing a thorough check-up, announced that Father's heart was partially damaged, his arteries were partly blocked and blood flow to his heart was severely restricted. Father would no longer be able to withstand the pressures of his normal work routine, as high stress could bring on another series of attacks; he would have to switch to a more sedentary lifestyle. Professor Goodwin left for London then, but had to be recalled ten days later as Father had had another attack of arrhythmia.

As it became apparent that Father's days were numbered, General Yahya Khan began to shuffle the generals around. Officers close to him were put in important positions. He also started keeping a tab on Father's health and made sure that he received the complete medical reports. So apparent was his desire to assume power that while on tour in Hong Kong, General Yahya Khan attended a dinner where he was asked who would be president after Ayub Khan. Without batting an eyelid, he said: 'The future President is standing before you.'

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Father's recovery was slow. He was still hoping to continue in office till the elections in 1970. By the end of April 1968, he was allowed to go to his office for approximately two hours each day. His movements were slow and one could see a lost look in his eyes. The amount of medication he was taking was visibly affecting him. Over time the two-hour routine was increased to three hours, but files which would upset him or put pressure on him were separated and attended to by his advisor.

I was living in Karachi at the time, and I kept the telephone by my bedside in case of any urgent news or emergency. One week, I had to rush to Rawalpindi three times as Father had suffered repeated attacks. Despite everything, Father appeared on television (receiving the Governor of East Pakistan), and he also issued a radio/TV broadcast. People could now clearly see that he was not the same.

A.N. Tareen, who was then the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Karachi, met me in September 1968 and told me that he had been following General Yahya Khan on his tours of Karachi and was convinced that ground was being prepared for a coup. Tareen wanted to meet Father to discuss this issue with him at length. I arranged a meeting between the two of them. I asked Father later if he thought the DIG's analysis had a solid grounding and if there really were indications of the preparations

for a coup. Father said that there were indeed indications of such a plan, and we needed to watch the matter closely.

But then he said 'You have served in GHQ and should know that if the Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army gets it into his head to take over, then it is only God above who can stop him'.

Father liked General Yahya Khan. He would not have been happy to hear about his activities. He took no precautions to further check what DIG Karachi A.N. Tareen had to say. Father gave full support to his subordinates and expected the same from them. This was his strong point and at times his weakness.

Then, for no rhyme or reason, the 'Decade of Development' was celebrated throughout the country in mid-1968 to highlight Pakistan's achievements in the past ten years. Most people blamed Altaf Gauhar, Father's Secretary of Information, for initiating the programme as well as for the expenses incurred in the process. Altaf Gauhar was a hard-working, intelligent officer but his closeness to Father and his handling of the media drew strong criticism at the time.

At the end of July 1968, Father went on a visit to the UK. He met Prime Minister Harold Wilson of the Labour Party, who hinted at the fact that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto possibly had been given substantial funds by an intelligence agency to destabilize Father's government. Father went to his doctor for a check-up. His health had improved, he was told, but he would still have to be cautious.

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A public meeting was arranged by the Muslim League in Peshawar on 11 November 1968. Some agencies had warned that there might be trouble during the meeting. All went well until Father started speaking. A young man got up and took two shots at Father with a pistol. The shots missed and nobody was hurt. The commotion died down after the attacker had been arrested

and removed from the scene, and the meeting continued. The young man was later identified by the police as Hashim from Charsadda, a PPP supporter.

In the meantime, the Agartala conspiracy was becoming an ugly affair in Dhaka. Junior officers from each of the three services were involved in a plot to overthrow the federal government. The conspirators had tried to spread their reach to some important personalities such as Sabur Khan, the East Pakistan Minister for Commerce, and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Father wanted the Agartala case to be tried secretly in camera in Dhaka, but General Yahya Khan strongly recommended that the case be tried in an open court to expose Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Feelings in East Pakistan were inflamed on a daily basis due to this open trial. In West Pakistan, Bhutto was spearheading the movement against Father. The slogan of '*Roti, Kapra aur Makan*' and the pledge of a thousand-year war with India did the job of igniting emotions in the Punjab. Meanwhile, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's 'six-point' agenda swept East Pakistan. All the opposition parties came together as the Combined Opposition Party (COP) and demanded Father's removal. Street demonstrations were held in practically every town and the ruling Muslim League became ineffective. The ministers tried to take out counter-processions but failed miserably. General Yahya Khan actively encouraged the opposition.

A round table conference was organized in Rawalpindi to which Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was brought under parole. Yusuf Haroon (who belonged to the influential Haroon family) received Mujibur Rahman at the Chaklala airport and took him straight to the GHQ to see General Yahya Khan. Yusuf Haroon wanted General Yahya to pressurize Mujib into softening his opposition and tell him that the army would back Father. In the meeting, however, General Yahya told Mujib that he would be neutral in the tussle between the Opposition and the President. Yusuf Haroon was struck dumb by General Yahya's sudden shift in position.

Though the round table conference ended on a relatively positive note, it was nevertheless criticized heavily by Bhutto in particular, who had decided to boycott the conference and attack the leaders who were trying to come to a resolution.

After the round table conference, Father announced that he would not be a candidate in the 1970 elections, and released Mujib. Yusuf Haroon replaced General Mohammad Musa as Governor of West Pakistan. The agitation against Father showed signs of slowing down in some areas but continued in the major cities. Yusuf Haroon did his best to control the situation in West Pakistan, but Monem Khan, the Governor in East Pakistan, was not popular there and was unable to control the situation. Along with Father, he too was targeted by the Opposition.

Around mid-March 1969, Father asked me about the political situation in the country, and I gave him the facts. I also told him that if he had inherited the presidency then he should fight for it, but if he considered himself just a custodian then he should resign. He gave a slight nod in response.

Some people came to Father and advised him to hold a referendum. He responded by saying: 'Is not what you see on the streets a referendum?' Others suggested that he kill five thousand people in the streets; that would surely calm things down. 'I cannot kill fifty chickens,' Father replied, 'And you are asking me to kill five thousand innocent people?'

Father finally asked General Yahya Khan to impose partial martial law in Karachi, Hyderabad and Lahore. When General Yahya made clear his unwillingness to do so, Father said to him, 'Yahya, I know what you are thinking.'

\* \* \* \*

Late in 1968, the National Assembly met in a hall in Lal Kurti, Rawalpindi. Bhutto had written a speech against Father which was to be read out in the assembly by Ghulam Mustafa Khar. It had taken over three days of preparation by Ghulam Mustafa

Jatoi to make Khar read and re-read this speech. In the evening session, Khar got up to deliver the speech. He had never spoken before in any proceedings of the National Assembly (except the oath-taking ceremony). Naturally, he was very nervous. I used to sit on his left and tugged at his trousers to stop his speech. To his credit, he managed to get through his entire speech. It is the same Khar who later came to be known as the 'Lion of the Punjab'.

The next session of the National Assembly was held in Dhaka in early January 1969. In the lobby of the P.C. hotel where some of us were staying, I said to Mustafa Khar, 'Ayub Khan wants to give you the whole of Pakistan but you people are hell-bent on taking only half.' He did not respond.

The parade on 23 March 1969 was to be held at the Race Course Ground in Rawalpindi, but it was cancelled due to political turbulence. The armoured units which had come to Rawalpindi were asked to draw ammunition from the Central Ammunition Depot. The plan for a takeover was being put into place. The battalion which provided security to the President's House and his office were withdrawn and a new battalion put in their place.

Father had sent two of his ministers, Admiral (retd) A.R. Khan and S.M. Zafar, the Secretary of Defence and the Secretary of Information, over to General Yahya Khan with the intention of taking General Yahya into confidence regarding his plans. Father wanted to give the new governors time to bring normalcy to the situation. He also wanted to summon the National Assembly to make constitutional amendments for a parliamentary form of government and direct adult franchise. General Yahya Khan flared up, saying the situation was worse than Father's and their assessment and that he would do his duty and no one could stop him. The direction that General Yahya Khan was heading in was becoming clearer by the day.

One of Father's failings was that he continued to keep ministers, governors and other officials for an extended period



despite complaints against them. Much of his problems possibly would have been lessened had he made frequent changes and new inductions of which there was no dearth. He removed some important personalities after they had done him quite a bit of harm and acted as heroes after their removal but had they been removed earlier they would have gone home unsung.

\* \* \* \*

The Information Secretary, Altaf Gauhar, had been under attack from the opposition and was accused of everything under the sun. In the last days of his rule, Father wanted to send Altaf abroad.

Most ministers had started slinking away from Father by then. One minister wanted Father to accept a back-dated letter of resignation so as to appear as if he had dissociated himself from the regime much earlier. Father accepted the letter. However, if there were any notable exceptions, it was people like Colonel Ghafoor Khan Hoti who remained loyal and steadfast till the end.

Pertinent portions of Father's letter to General Mohammad Yahya Khan dated 24 March 1969 are:

I thought I would call the National Assembly to consider the two agreed points but it soon became obvious that this would be an exercise in futility. The members of the Assembly are no longer free agents and there is no likelihood of the agreed two points being faithfully adopted. Indeed, members are being threatened and compelled either to boycott the session or to move such amendments as would liquidate the Central Government, make the maintenance of the armed forces impossible, divide the economy of the country and break up Pakistan into little bits and pieces. Calling the Assembly in such chaotic conditions can only aggravate the situation.

It is beyond the capacity of the Civil Government to deal with the present complex situation, and the Defence forces must step in.

It is your legal and constitutional responsibility to defend the country not only against external aggression but also to save it from internal disorder and chaos.

On leaving office on 25 March Father made the statement on radio and television that he could not preside over the country's destruction.

\* \* \* \*

On 25 March 1969, General Yahya Khan took over. Martial Law was declared and the Constitution abrogated. Father left for Swat where he stayed for some time and then returned to his house in Islamabad. I went to see Altaf Gauhar at his residence and tried to cheer him up, knowing that he too would face difficult days ahead.

Practically every paper carried allegations against Father, our family, and me. However, Father made it a policy not to give any statements or contradict any of those claims appearing constantly in the press. The only exception he made was when Mr Suleri published an article in his newspaper saying that Father had ordered the Trident aircraft for PIA and taken a nice commission off the deal. Father sent me the news-cutting and asked me to consult a good lawyer about suing Mr Suleri. Father had in fact helped Mr Suleri when he was in financial trouble and now Father was being maligned by the same man he had aided!

I consulted Mr A.K. Brohi, a leading lawyer of Karachi, on the matter. After patiently hearing me out, he explained to me that every Tom, Dick, and Harry was giving statements against Father, and that suing Mr Suleri would only increase sales for his newspaper whereas the case itself would drag on for years. Father would eventually win the case, but before its conclusion Mr Suleri would absolve himself by apologizing and thus closing the case. When I spoke to Father about my discussion with Mr

Brohi, he was not satisfied but ended up accepting the lawyer's advice.

\* \* \* \*

On 2 May 1971, Father and I arrived at the Kennedy International Airport in New York, where we were received by Agha Hilaly, Agha Shahi, Yusuf Haroon and his wife. An officer from the State Department also met us at the airport and we were taken to a VIP waiting room where he gave Father a letter from President Nixon. Yusuf Haroon remained with us till we caught the connecting flight to Cleveland, Ohio, where Father was to have an open-heart surgery.

President Nixon called Father at the clinic after the operation. They exchanged good wishes and President Nixon wished him an early recovery. Father took the opportunity to request President Nixon to release the M-47/M-48 tanks which had been required by Pakistan when he was President.

In July 1971, Father came to stay with us in our Simla Hill house in Abbottabad where we were hosting an unexpected visitor—Neville Maxwell, the author of *India's China War*. After the introductions, Father asked Maxwell the reason for his visit to Pakistan. Maxwell was writing a book on the 1965 war, he said, and wanted Father's help. Father replied: 'All the papers, orders, maps etc. are with the GHQ; I do not keep anything with me. I am more concerned about a war that is about to be thrust upon us by India. Write about the impending war.'

Agha Mohammad Ali Khan, the Deputy Director of the Intelligence Bureau and elder brother of General Yahya Khan, came to see Father at his residence in Islamabad in the third week of April 1971. He had been sent by General Yahya Khan to seek Father's advice on what should be done in East Pakistan. Father told him: 'Tell him [General Yahya], Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is your prisoner in West Pakistan. Negotiate with him the withdrawal of the army. Pakistan will not remain a federation

after the killings that have taken place. Work for a confederation... under the circumstances this is the best solution for Pakistan.'

Of course, General Yahya Khan did not pay heed to Father's advice.

\* \* \* \*

The entire family gathered around Father in Islamabad for Eid in 1974. He had become very weak and lost weight. On 20 April 1974, the doctor came to see Father for his monthly check-up at 12:45 p.m. The appointment was for 1 p.m. so the doctor was seated in the drawing room and given something to drink. At 1 p.m. the orderly knocked on Father's door, but there was no response. He opened the door and approached the bed. The radio was on and Father was lying on his bed with two pillows and a large bolster under his head with both hands on his side. The orderly tried to wake him but to no avail. He had died peacefully in his sleep.

I was sitting in the veranda of my house in Abbottabad when the phone rang and I received the news. We rushed to Islamabad. The body had been moved from his room to the lawn because people had come in very large numbers to pay their respects. The next morning his body was taken in an army ambulance which moved quite slowly, and eventually heated up and broke down *en route*. However, the people pushed the ambulance all the way up to the Race Course Ground, where his funeral prayers were held. Thousands of people were present, all except Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Father's body was then taken to Rehana. The road from Sarai Saleh to Rehana was blocked, as people thronged to the village for the burial. The constant stream of people into Rehana continued for a good forty days. A detachment of his battalion, the Sher-Dils, came to present the farewell salute. Eight generals in two helicopters and a minister of the PPP government (M. Hanif Khan), were also present.

According to Father's wishes he was buried next to his mother in Rehana. He had instructed me not to make his grave *pucca* [permanent] and to keep it as simple as possible. I did as he wished.

About ten days later, Bhutto and his wife came to Father's Islamabad residence to offer their condolences. He said he had been advised not to attend the funeral for fear that someone in the crowd would insult him.

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Father's death was first announced by All India Radio. PTV and Radio Pakistan announced later that a former President had died—they did not even mention his name.

# 15

## SPLITTING PAKISTAN

ON COMING TO power, General Yahya Khan restored the provincial status of East and West Pakistan by breaking up the One Unit on 30 March 1970. As a result, East Pakistan became the majority province with 52 per cent of the population of Pakistan. The parity between the two wings was thus done away with.

The new government announced in December 1969 that general elections were to be held in December 1970, which would give the political parties a full year to campaign for votes. During the campaign, the Awami League—led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman—pressed forward with its six-point programme. Maulana Bhashani, a popular figure of the National Awami Party was advocating leftist agendas, and meanwhile the Muslim League had split into three groups. The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) had no interest in East Pakistan. The military government was actively supporting the Council Muslim League (CML) and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) in East Pakistan against the Awami League. By doing so, the military government proved that it preferred to live in a make-believe world. General Yahya Khan had served in East Pakistan as the GOC 14 Division for three years; he knew it well and had made friends there. He should have been able to see which way the tide was turning, but chose not to. It seems that alcohol and women had clouded the judgement of the top echelons of the military government.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was in contact with the CML and the JI. He knew he would get a landslide victory but did not want an overwhelming majority in East Pakistan as he felt that this would

make him hostage to his party which was very aggressive and inflexible with regard to the six-point agenda. He opened up secret negotiations with the CML and the JI in East Pakistan and offered them seats in the elections. The CML and JI, as well as the intelligence agencies, were out of touch with ground realities and instead demanded an unreasonably high number of seats in East Pakistan. Mujib told these parties that they probably would not win a single seat on their own, but there he was, willing to give them close to forty seats. The assessment of the CML and JI may have been based on the intelligence agencies' reports which were full of wishful thinking, at best. And so the negotiations failed, and each of the three parties went their own way.

In West Pakistan, General Yahya Khan was supporting Abdul Qayyum Khan's League and the CML. In the meantime, Bhutto was drawing large crowds with his *roti, kapra, aur makan* slogan. Every time he stood up in public and promised to fight a thousand-year war with India, the crowds would go wild with delight. General Yahya Khan and his agencies underplayed the impact of Bhutto's rising popularity. As there were no big names other than Bhutto in the PPP at the time, the agencies reported that the party only had tongawalas as candidates, who would be no match for the entrenched landed gentry of the Punjab. Little did they know that a few surprises awaited them just around the corner.

A few days before the elections, a cyclone hit East Pakistan. The damage was extensive and the elections had to be postponed. The dates decided upon were 7 December for the National Assembly elections, and 17 December for the Provincial Assembly elections. Nobody of political stature from West Pakistan went to the East to give them moral or financial support in their time of need, and by neglecting the situation, General Yahya Khan missed an opportunity to put the brakes on the escalating tensions between the two wings of the country. In the aftermath of the cyclone, support for the Awami League only intensified.

The results of the elections in East Pakistan literally took General Yahya Khan's breath away. Contrary to his expectations, Bhutto won a majority of the National and Provincial seats in the Punjab. The PPP won 88 out of a total of 144 seats in West Pakistan, and Mujib's Awami League got—a stunning result!—167 out of the 169 seats in East Pakistan. The only two non-Awami Leaguers who won in the East were Nurul Amin (from the Pakistan Democratic Party) and Raja Tridev Roy (the chief of the Chakma tribe from the Chittagong hill tracts). The Awami League could now easily form a majority in the National Assembly and they were also in a position to form the government by forging an alliance with any of the other West Pakistani parties in the Assembly. But this was not to be.

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Bhutto went around attacking General Yahya in several of his public meetings. General Yahya considered it expedient to invite Bhutto to the negotiating table. Bhutto managed to pacify General Yahya (probably over stiff drinks) and at the same time play his double game. In fact, both of them needed each other for their own purposes. Bhutto needed the support of the army to oppose Mujib, and General Yahya needed Bhutto's support to be elected president.

General Yahya set a date for the inauguration of the National Assembly. Bhutto demanded that there be two prime ministers, for he knew he would have to sit in the Opposition if Mujib chose the smaller parties as coalition partners—and this he was not prepared to accept. Bhutto then made an announcement claiming that he would 'break the legs' of whoever went to Dhaka to attend the inauguration of the National Assembly. General Yahya succumbed to the pressure. On 28 February 1971, he postponed the inauguration. Bhutto's call of '*Idhar Hum Udhar Tum*' (us here and you there), set the tone for a serious political and military conflict with the Awami League.



Meetings were convened in Dhaka to discuss these developments, which Bhutto and General Yahya, along with other political leaders, attended. The meetings resolved nothing; General Yahya declared his intention to continue as President, Bhutto demanded two prime ministers for Pakistan, and Mujib wanted the National Assembly convened to complete the democratic process. As soon as General Yahya and Bhutto left Dhaka, they initiated a crackdown against the Awami League. Mujib was arrested and brought to West Pakistan. General Yahya had arrested the wrong man, though. In Paltan Maidan, Mujib may have said a lot but he had not made a unilateral declaration of independence.

A military operation began in East Pakistan, which the Pakistan Army was not in a position to win. At the time, Lieutenant Colonel Saghir Hussain Shah, who was taking the 29 Lancers (a tank regiment consisting of seventy-two M-24 light American tanks) to East Pakistan, stayed with us (along with his wife) in Karachi before leaving for East Pakistan. This regiment was to be 50 per cent East Pakistanis and 50 per cent West Pakistanis. I told Lieutenant Colonel Saghir Hussain Shah to be very careful. 'I can't understand why you are taking your wife with you,' I said to him. 'I strongly feel there is going to be a revolt in East Pakistan. My advice to you is to keep the driver and gunner on the tanks from West Pakistan. The East Pakistanis are going to rise up against the West. It will be more or less the same as the sepoy uprising against the British officers in 1857.' He thought I was out of my mind.

My brother-in-law, Captain Ali Kuli Khan, was also posted to East Pakistan in April 1971 to fly helicopters. He too stayed with us before taking up his posting. I warned him just as I had warned Lieutenant Colonel Saghir Hussain Shah, and told him that India would invade East Pakistan, and our army would end up surrendering. 'Keep your helicopter fully fuelled; not on an airfield but far away somewhere, and when the hour comes, fly out to either Nepal or Burma,' I said to him.

Captain Ali Kuli Khan, along with six other helicopters, flew out of Dhaka in the early hours of 16 December 1971, the day that the West Pakistani troops surrendered in East Pakistan.

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When the military operation was launched, India banned overland flights between East and West Pakistan. As a result, PIA had to go around the tip of India over Sri Lanka to transport troops to East Pakistan. Battalion after battalion was being sent. Whenever I would go to Islamabad, Father would ask me about the prevailing situation. I would give him an account of the battalions which had left for East Pakistan. He was very worried, and said to me: 'I had sent General Yahya Khan to East Pakistan. He served there for three years and knows the place. He must know we cannot fight India in East Pakistan. Aurangzeb *Badshah* [Mughal Emperor] drove his brother Shuja and his army from Bengal into Arakan never to be heard of again. They just disappeared. Does General Yahya Khan want to do the same to the Pakistan Army in East Pakistan? He is weakening us here in the West. He should negotiate with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.'

India had planned the invasion of East Pakistan beforehand. The necessary troops, tanks, air force and the navy with its aircraft carrier *Vikrant*, were all ready for battle. Their plan was to capture East Pakistan and then swing forces in to West Pakistan. The entire operational plan of India to attack East Pakistan was published in an American magazine fourteen days before the attack was launched. No one took any notice of it. The High Command both in East Pakistan and the GHQ did not expect India to invade, possibly because of imaginary assurances from the USA and China. The reality was that since the crackdown on 25 March 1971, an open civil war had broken out in East Pakistan. Many Bengalis, both Hindus and Muslims, were being killed. The Indians set up numerous refugee camps to incorporate the flood of East Pakistanis crossing into India.

Inflammatory statements and ethnically prejudiced claims to 'change the future race of East Pakistan' made by some West Pakistani soldiers and officers did not help matters.

A delegation of politicians went to East Pakistan in mid-June 1971. They returned with the information that things were returning to normal. Some of these politicians came to see me as well. After they left, a tea planter from East Pakistan came to see me, and I asked him about the situation in his parts. He told me that he had to carry a loaded rifle with him even when he went to the toilet.

In August 1971, I was travelling from Karachi to Islamabad by PIA when the aircraft stopped at Lahore to pick up some passengers. Among those who boarded the plane were Lieutenant General Gul Hassan and Major General Ghulam Umar, both of whom were returning from East Pakistan. After take-off, I went and sat next to Lieutenant General Gul Hassan. He told me that they had gone to East Pakistan to see for themselves what the ground realities were. Only a miracle could save us there, he said. 'Does the Chief [General Yahya] know this?' I asked him. 'Will you discuss your report with him?'

Lieutenant General Gul Hassan closed his eyes and said, 'Gohar, I do not get to see the Chief for three months at a stretch.'

'You're not serious!' I exclaimed.

'Believe me, I have to fight my way in to be able to see him, and it is not at all pleasant.'

'God help us,' I sighed. We were heading towards a disaster, and that too, with our eyes wide open.

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On 2 November 1971, I wrote to the Adjutant General at the GHQ giving them my Pakistan Army number and my address, stating that although I had no reserve liability I was offering my services to the army in any capacity they wished. Within a week

I received a reply from the GHQ thanking me for my offer but declining it because there was no chance of war with India. They were telling me, in other words, that I was off my rocker.

Some days later, we were having dinner at my brother-in-law's house in Islamabad when news of four Pakistan Sabre jets being destroyed by the Indians came flashing on the television screen. Right then I said, 'We have lost the war.' No one agreed with me. I told them that the effect on our morale will be devastating, and the Indians will use this incident to the maximum and become very aggressive.

War was declared on 3 December 1971. All ex-officers were recalled. I reported to the Station Headquarters in Karachi and requested them to give me some assignment straight away. They would have none of it and gave me a railway warrant to proceed to the Punjab Regimental Centre in Mardan. I did not want to travel by rail because I was convinced that this time the Indian Air Force would hit our railway trains instead of our airfields. And so I came home and told my driver to prepare for our departure. I got together whatever was left with me from my army days and left for Mardan that evening in a Fiat 124.

I drove the car most of the way, fast and with the lights on full beam. People on the roads shouted at me to turn my lights down, but I wouldn't; and I ran the risk of the car being stoned or even fired at by a policeman or security personnel. However, I drove on like that because I knew that any night attack by the Indian Air Force would be on select targets, and that a stray vehicle with full headlights on wouldn't come under suspicion. Seeing Lieutenant General Tikka Khan's Corps Headquarters, I stopped and had a cup of tea with him. I asked him why he was not launching his attack, and he replied that he had to await orders from the GHQ.

The Sher-Dils had a full complement of officers so I had to wait a few days in Mardan for my posting to a battalion that was short of officers. During this period, I received news that the Indian Air Force had carried out a night attack on the Korangi

Refinery but had missed their target. I also heard that the Canberra bomber had dropped bombs on the residential Defence Society. These were 1000-pound bombs, and the blast was so strong that all the large windowpanes of my house in Defence Society were shattered. My wife and children were in the house at the time, but luckily no one was hurt.

The military leadership was just not up to the challenge of facing the Indians. Bhutto was sent to China, and his hosts recommended a negotiated settlement. He conveyed the suggestion to General Yahya Khan and told the General that China was offering help, implying that the Chinese were willing to put military pressure on the Indians. The Chinese, however, had made no such commitment.

As a result of this miscommunication, Indian troops coming towards Dhaka were thought to be Chinese troops who had come to assist Pakistan, and the officers that were sent to receive them were captured. Many proposed that the Eastern Command should have gone into a box formation around Dhaka, withdrawing troops as best as they could from outlying areas and then possibly the UN could have negotiated the evacuation of troops to West Pakistan and they would not have been transferred to India as POWs. However, there would have been heavy casualties in the process of making box-formations, as the troops would have been very vulnerable to attacks from the air. Besides, most of the American administration was in support of the creation of the state of Bangladesh. Only President Nixon was fully supportive of a united Pakistan.

Pakistan's thrust into the Rajasthan desert—planned well before any talk of war had begun—was to be a brigade attack towards Longewala in India. It was to be provided air cover. When the war started, air cover for the 55 Brigade was not available, but they were still ordered to attack. The Brigade did not meet any Indian troops but they were hit from the air by four Indian Hunter fighters. The 38 Cavalry suffered heavy casualties and six Sherman tanks were knocked out. The brigade had to

withdraw, and three Sherman tanks which could not be towed back were destroyed by their crew.

The submarine *Ghazi* was sent to the Bay of Bengal to mine ports off the eastern coast of India. Rather than being sent to mine ports, its target should have been the aircraft carrier *Vikrant*, which was positioned off the coast of East Pakistan. It is said that the carrier would have full lights on during the war because it had no fear of a Pakistani attack. There was an explosion on-board the *Ghazi* caused by sparking in its batteries, and it sank. (The Indian version was that the *Ghazi* was first spotted by Indian fishing boats and then the Indian Navy attacked and sank the submarine. Whatever the facts were, the submarine equipment and life jackets which surfaced were displayed in the Indian Lok Sabha). On the other hand, another Pakistani submarine—this one commanded by Commander Tasneem Ahmad (who had been Father's ADC)—had been tracking the Indian frigate *Khukri*, and sank it with most of the men aboard.

On 15 December 1971, we were watching the news on television in the Officer's Mess at Mardan in which the newscaster painted a bleak picture of the situation in East Pakistan. There was a howl of protest in the room. The newscaster went on to say that the Pakistani troops would fight to the end.

The very next day, the same newscaster announced that West Pakistani troops had surrendered. Bhutto telecasted footage of the final days of fighting in and around Dhaka and of the surrender. This caused a public outrage, and the surrender was not shown on television again.

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I reached Okara by train from Rawalpindi on 27 December 1971. There was a blackout in the city, and not a soul was to be seen. The only transport I spotted was a rickety tonga being drawn by a half-dead horse. I told the driver to take me to the Sutlej Textile

Mills, owned by my father-in-law. I stayed there overnight, and early the next morning I took a Dodge belonging to the mill and drove to Sulemanki headworks, where 105 Brigade Headquarters were located. I had been posted to 7 Punjab, which was my elder brother Akhtar's battalion. Upon reaching the Brigade Headquarters, I reported to Major Abdul Wahid Kakar (who later became Army Chief). It began circulating in the headquarters that a strange fellow had come in a limousine to join the war.

A jeep was sent from 7 Punjab HQ located in an Indian village called Pucca. I was happy to find Lieutenant Colonel Mohammad Sadiq commanding 7 Punjab (we had served together in the Sher-Dils). He assigned me the support company to command, which had the 3-inch mortar platoon, the 106mm anti-tank rifle platoon, the pioneer platoon, the signal platoon, and a section of cobra anti-tank missiles from the Frontier Force regiment.

Two days later, I was assigned to take Brigadier Ziaul Haq through a minefield and show him the position on the Subuna drain captured by Major Shabbir Sharif of the 6 FF. This was the old 4/12 Frontier Force which Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw joined as a Second Lieutenant in early 1935 and won the Military Cross on 22 February 1942 in Burma fighting the Japanese. As I was taking the Brigadier there, he told me about his job in Jordan. Brigadier Ziaul Haq and his team were training the Jordanian army and he had returned to Pakistan to take part in the war but had been unable to get the posting to command a brigade.

A company of Sutlej Rangers was also put under my command. They had been given two 85mm Chinese artillery guns and hardly knew how to use them. One of the Havalgars, Mohammad Ayub, would open the breach of the gun, look through the barrel, then load the gun and fire at Indian bunkers and pillboxes on the bund of the Subuna drain. Once, while he was getting prepared to fire, an Indian anti-tank missile hit a tree close to his gun. The missile exploded, and the Havalgar was killed in the blast. He was awarded a medal posthumously.

The Indians had constructed excellent bunkers and concrete pillboxes for their troops on the Subuna drain bund and on the bunds made further in depth. Direct hits by the Chinese 85mm artillery did them little damage. A string of three anti-tank mines, which we had captured from the Indians, were put around a pillbox and detonated. There was a cloud of dust and smoke, but only the steel door was blown off.

There was also an Indian pillbox in no man's land which men of the Indian 3 Assam Regiment would come and occupy at dawn and dusk. One day when the Indians left the pillbox after dusk, I sent men from the Pioneers to put mines around it and booby-trap the door. When the Indians returned the next morning, the door blew off and three men were injured. They did not come back after that episode.

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The morning of 30 December 1971, I was told by my Commanding Officer (CO) that approximately twelve civilian VIPs were coming to see the Brigade and that they would have lunch with us, for which I was to make arrangements. I told the CO that Bhutto was coming only so that he could publicly declare that he had been to the border and seen that Pakistani troops have captured areas inside Indian territory. The CO thought that Bhutto's visit was unnecessary and dangerous, and thought it unlikely that Bhutto himself would come. 'I am sure he is coming, so I will make the arrangements accordingly,' I said.

Sure enough, two helicopters landed at the Brigade Headquarters shortly. Word came over the wireless that Bhutto had landed. When he came to meet the 7 Punjab, the officers were lined up in the Pucca village school. He walked down the line shaking hands with the officers, and when it was my turn I saluted him. A moment after putting out his hand, he suddenly recognized me and asked with surprise, 'What are you doing here?'



'Doing my duty,' I replied.

After lunch, Bhutto was taken to the forward positions of the 7 Punjab. A group photo was taken in the courtyard of one of the larger houses that belonged to the Sikhs of the area. Governor Mustafa Khar, Lieutenant General Gul Hassan (the new Chief of Army Staff), Corps Commander Lieutenant General Bahadur Sher and Brigade Commander Amir Hamza Khan stood with Bhutto and the others. I stood away, presuming that I was too junior to be included in that high-powered group.

'Gohar, don't you want to be photographed with me?' Bhutto called out.

I went and stood at one end of the row. He beckoned at me to come and stand next to him.

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Recommendations were sent by 7 Punjab to promote me to Major. However, on 8 January 1972, orders came in that I was to be released from the army. I enjoyed those few days in uniform immensely, despite the unfortunate fact that we lost half the country during that time.

I left by jeep for Okara and caught the train for Karachi. I rode in an air-conditioned compartment along with one civilian and a Bengali naval officer. My uniform box, bedroll, hatbox and camp cot had my name stenciled on them as 'Capt. G.A. Khan'. The two passengers did not know who I was, nor did I tell them. The civilian turned out to be a PPP man. From the start of the journey he had been criticizing Father and I. I played along and egged him on as he made up stories even more detailed and scandalous than the previous ones. All this time, the Bengali officer remained quiet. When we got nearer to Karachi, I asked the PPP man whether he knew Gohar Ayub Khan.

'Who does not know him?' replied the man. 'I know him very well.'

'Would you be able to point him out to me if he was nearby?' I asked.

'Certainly!'

'Good,' I said, 'for I am Gohar Ayub Khan.'

'You, Gohar Ayub Khan?' The man laughed at me. 'Look at your face; who do you think you are? And who can miss Gohar Ayub?'

'I am Gohar Ayub Khan,' I repeated.

'Look at him, sahib,' the man said to the naval officer. 'He says he is Gohar Ayub Khan.' Then, turning to me, he asked, 'Can you prove your identity?'

I pulled out the dog tags I was wearing around my neck which were made for me doing the parachute course in the USA. The Bengali officer read the tag aloud and looked up at me in surprise. The PPP fellow was rendered speechless.

The train finally stopped at the Karachi Cantonment Railway Station. The PPP guy—who was now feeling very sheepish—picked up my luggage, hailed me a taxi, apologized profusely and embraced me when saying goodbye.

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The Indian plans to bring its forces to bear against West Pakistan after the surrender, were put to an end by US and UN pressure. The whole world, with the exception of Bhutan, was against India when it attacked East Pakistan. However, India claimed to have realized its long-cherished dream—and actually issued a statement clearly proclaiming—that the humiliation of one thousand years of Muslim rule had been avenged. Unfortunately, quite a number of Indian regiments have some pieces of captured Pakistani equipment from East Pakistan displayed in their messes.

Out of the 90,000 prisoners of war taken by India, 40,000 were from the armed forces. Major General Jacobs of the Indian Army called on Major General Rao Farman Ali and showed him the

file compiled on the alleged rape of Bengali women by the Pakistan Army. The figure was so high that Major General Farman Ali told him, 'Have a heart! The figures you are trying to peddle would leave the Pakistan Army with no time to be doing anything else but carry out rape.' Major General Jacobs backed down.

The exact number of killings and the amount of looting and burning during the sweep operations in East Pakistan will never be known. The figures given by the Awami League are exaggerated. However, what is certain is that a massive number of people were killed on both sides—and that included West Pakistani civilians. East Pakistanis also suffered brutalities. Indeed, it has never happened in history that the majority group of a country broke away from the minority in a fight for 'independence'.

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General Yahya Khan, who had long been seeking to install himself as President, had a draft constitution ready well before the 1971 war. Bhutto accepted the draft, and it was circulated to another select few, which included Father. (Thus, I too got the chance to go through the draft). But Father's copy of the draft went missing. It used to lie in his bedroom along with other books of his. Upon his death, scores of people streamed into his room and took things away with them as souvenirs, so perhaps one of those people took it. As foreign minister, I tried to get a copy from the Law Ministry and the Judge Advocate General at the GHQ, but without success. Bhutto, it seems, had all copies of the draft collected and destroyed.

After the surrender of East Pakistan, General Yahya called a meeting of officers in the hall near the Church in Lal Kurti (which used to serve as the National Assembly). Officers from the 6 Armoured Division, Kharian, had come together, and Lieutenant Colonel Aleem Afridi and others demanded that

General Yahya hand over power. He was probably hoping that Air Marshal Asghar Khan's name would be supported for the presidency.

Meanwhile, in Rawalpindi, Khar lead a procession demanding that Bhutto be recalled immediately and power be handed over to him. (Bhutto was in New York, where he had been sent to plead Pakistan's case in the UN, and had decided to stay on till the surrender was announced.) Bhutto was then asked to come back to Pakistan. Before returning, he went first to Washington where he held a meeting with President Nixon.

Bhutto was sworn in as both President and Martial Law Administrator on 21 December 1971. At his first cabinet meeting, he announced, 'Gentlemen, we are here for twenty years.'

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After the surrender of Pakistani troops in East Pakistan and the ceasefire in West Pakistan, I asked Father how we would fare against India next time around. Father said that the military machine of Pakistan was intact, and our plan should be such that after stabilizing and containing the Indian attacks, we should go on to attack them on two fronts and reinforce the front which was going well. His comments remind me of a Chinese general who said, 2000 years ago, that a successful commander is the one who plans his battle, takes into consideration all possible eventualities, makes arrangements for it to the best of his ability, and if he has the time, says a prayer for his success. An unsuccessful commander will be the one who goes to battle without preparation and then looks around for success.

Before the 1965 war and even after it, Pakistani officers were generally confident of taking on India. After the surrender in East Pakistan, however, that same enthusiasm and confidence took quite some time to be restored.

# 16

## SOME PERSONALITIES AND ENCOUNTERS

### **Air Marshal (retd) Asghar Khan**

WHEN THE HEAD of the Pakistan Air Force, Air Vice Marshal A.W.D. McDonald, recommended to the government in 1957 that Air Commodore Maqbool Rabb be his replacement, Father decided to nominate to the government Asghar Khan for the post instead. This proved to be a judicious choice; Air Marshal Asghar Khan was a brave, honest and upright man. His thorough training of the air force was proved during the 1965 war. Unfortunately, his assessment of the times and the political climate was not always correct; otherwise he could have held top government positions in Pakistan.

During the Rann of Kutch conflict, the PAF did not provide air support to the army; Air Marshal Asghar Khan contacted his Indian counterpart and told him that both air forces should stay out of the conflict. After this incident—which naturally invoked the displeasure of General Musa—Air Marshal Asghar Khan was transferred in April 1965 to the post of Chairman PIA. Air Marshal Nur Khan formally took over as Air Chief in July 1965.

On 6 September 1965, the day that India attacked Pakistan across the international border, Asghar Khan rushed to the Operations Room of the Air Headquarters where Air Marshal Nur Khan and others were present. The former chief wanted to give his input, having trained the PAF for some time. Air Marshal Nur Khan felt cramped by Asghar Khan's presence. To diffuse the situation, Father sent Asghar Khan on a mission to tour

China, Indonesia, and Iran to request aircraft, arms and ammunition. All three countries responded promptly to the request; Indonesia even sent us missile boats and a submarine. The former chief had evidently done a good job on the tour.

After the 1965 war, there was a need to have a defence minister in the cabinet. Admiral (retd) A.R. Khan was chosen for the position. I suspect that Air Marshal Asghar Khan was expecting that he would be appointed. When that did not happen, he decided to join the opposition on completion of his tenure as Chairman of PIA.

Air Marshal (retd) Asghar Khan would have been a good choice as Defence Minister but I suspect General Mohammad Musa the army chief would not have been happy. There was little love lost between the two.

Asghar Khan's sense of timing with regard to his political moves has been consistently flawed. He held public meetings in early 1969 against Father, attracting hundreds of thousands of people in Dhaka—and then, when the opportunity to become President of the country or Chairman of the Senate came along, he sulked and went to Abbottabad to form his Justice Party. Similarly, he led the opposition against Bhutto; but again, after Bhutto's exit, Asghar Khan fell prey to General Ziaul Haq's offer to make him the prime minister.

Towards the end of September 1977, Air Marshal Asghar Khan drove up to my Simla Hill house in Abbottabad, and asked me to accompany him to Iran and China to meet the Shah of Iran and Premier Zhou En-lai. (General Ziaul Haq had asked him to meet with these leaders so that he would be familiar with them [and vice-versa] when Asghar Khan was made prime minister.) I reminded Asghar Khan that he had been a Deputy Martial Law Administrator under Father, so he should know the working of a military government and its mindset: being a senior officer and a popular person, he would never be put in a position of power by General Ziaul Haq—and he definitely would not be given the post of prime minister.

A long period of martial law ensued after General Ziaul Haq came to power. Asghar Khan did what was required of him in the early stages of General Zia's government, but when it became clear to him that he would not be made prime minister, he began to speak out against General Ziaul Haq, who promptly put him under a house-arrest which lasted nearly four years.

In 1975, Air Marshal Asghar Khan called me to his residence in Abbottabad and told me that a retired army major had come to him and pledged support for his party. The major was claiming that he was prepared to assassinate Bhutto. The Air Marshal was convinced that the fellow was a plant, and that he was possibly part of a sting operation being planned by Bhutto. I was of the opinion, I told him, that even if the major acts on his claim, the PPP would still be very much in the political picture and Nusrat Bhutto would be elected in Bhutto's stead. And, in the event that Bhutto were in fact to be assassinated, everyone belonging to the opposition would be rounded up—and some possibly killed—by the PPP.

Again in 1993, I received a message from Asghar Khan asking for advice for the upcoming elections. I sent back word that he should try to gather all the people who had joined his party in the early years and then left; if he could do so, his party would stand a good chance of winning.

### **Zulfikar Ali Bhutto**

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was a charismatic young man: polished, educated, well-dressed and came from one of the most widely known families of Sindh. He was introduced to President Iskander Mirza through the Farsi-speaking cabal of Begum Naheed Mirza, Lady Haroon, Begum Ispahani, and Nusrat Bhutto, all of whom lived in Karachi. They were an influential group, these women. Begum Naheed Mirza, formerly the wife of the Iranian defence attaché, was not fond of socializing with

Pakistani women. When the President married her, she further isolated herself from the Pakistani community and socialized mostly with the above-mentioned women who formed a close-knit group.

Through his wife's associations, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto gained entry into the President's House. In February 1958, he hosted a duck-and-partridge shoot for the President and the Commander-in-Chief of the army. The President and his wife stayed at Bhutto's residence in Larkana while the rest of the guests stayed in their railway saloons at the station. It was a three-day affair, and Bhutto and his wife were excellent hosts.

Three days before the declaration of martial law, it was rumoured that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was to be inducted into the provincial cabinet as a minister. Just before the ceremony was to take place, an announcement came in saying that Bhutto had fallen ill, and the ceremony did not take place. On 7 October 1958, General Iskander Mirza abrogated the constitution and declared martial law. A few days later, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was sworn in as Federal Minister for Petroleum, Natural Resources, Commerce, Industry, etc. The martial law government had decided not to include former ministers in the cabinet. Had Bhutto been sworn in a few days earlier, his political fate would have been sealed.

Initially, as a minister, Bhutto hardly made a mark, was usually in trouble, and often called in and reproved—but always lovingly—by Father. He wore very tight drainpipe trousers, as was the rage among the youth in the UK at the time. He was known as Zulfi to all who knew him. At the time of his birth, his mother had his *janam patri* (horoscope) prepared by a *pandit* from Mumbai. The *pandit* predicted that Bhutto would rise to great heights but meet a violent death. Bhutto seldom made a secret of this prediction and we thought he might be destined to die in a road accident or something in that vein. When he became Martial Law Administrator, he sent G. A. Allana a friend



of his to Mumbai to revisit the *pandit*, who looked at the *janam patri* and said that there was no change in it.

Father liked the young Bhutto and my mother took Nusrat Bhutto under her wing. Father started grooming him and later made him Foreign Minister and Secretary General of the Muslim League. At the time, Zulfi and Nusrat were not on good terms and their marriage was on the rocks. Father invited the two of them to the Governor House in Nathiagali, where Mother was waiting for them in the billiard room which served as the entrance to the house. Mother caught hold of Zulfi and told him that he was ill-treating Nusrat by not giving her money to look after the house and children. Zulfi replied by saying he was giving her one thousand rupees a month. My mother insisted that he should increase that amount to two thousand. Zulfi said he could not afford that sum, and went on to severely criticise Nusrat. He went on to say that she was responsible for his mother using a tonga for transportation in Larkana to which my mother told him in a harsh tone to behave himself, and that he should have thought of these things before marrying her. She told him to treat Nusrat well and to stop womanising, and threatened to talk to Father and have him removed as minister if he didn't shape up. After listening to Mother's tirade, Zulfi calmed down and fell quiet. The three of them then went and sat with Father, and Mother told him all was well and settled for the time being. The couple left Nathiagali on reasonably good terms.

Shahnawaz Bhutto—Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's father—had won the local elections in Larkana back in the 1930s, but not since then. Due to this dip in the family's political stature, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto sought Mumtaz Bhutto's help for the 1965 National Assembly elections. Mumtaz Bhutto had disappeared into the Chittagong hill tracts in East Pakistan but Colonel Ghafoor Khan Hoti was sent to bring him back to support Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

Two groups were forming in the cabinet after the 1965 war—on the one hand was Bhutto, portraying himself as pro-Russia

and pro-China; and on the other was Mohammad Shoaib, the Finance Minister, who was clearly leaning towards the US. Both tried to oust each other from the cabinet and Father cautioned both against quarrelling.

Father first informed Bhutto in January 1966 that he would be removed from the cabinet. Father's diary entry dated 2 September 1966, clearly mentions that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had been asked to leave the cabinet in early July, whereas Bhutto complained that he was given only twenty-four hours notice. Other extracts from Father's diary regarding Bhutto are given below:

**2 September 1966:** When he left, the leftist elements and a certain section of student community made a lot of fuss. I was accused of turning him out because of his pro-china and anti-USA tendencies. Some said that he went under American pressure and that the American aid was conditional on this.

None of these things are there. He went because during last year or so, something perceptible went wrong with him.

He started using provocative language even on international platforms and started behaving in an irresponsible and objectionable manner. He was working fast in the direction of becoming another Krishna Menon or Subandrio. Demagogy became his stock in trade. Several warnings went unheeded. So, there was no alternative but to tell him to go. Besides, he started drinking himself to stupor and led a very loose life. It is a pity that a man of considerable talent went astray. I offered him a foreign assignment, but he was not interested.

His real trouble was that he started running a personal policy assisted by a few elements in the Foreign Office instead of the national policy; also he was distrusted and disliked in most capitals.

**23 May 1967:** Dined with Said Hassan. He told me that when he was our representative at UN, Bhutto came as the head of our delegation to the General Assembly. He asked to see Christian Herter, the US secretary of State and Macmillan who happened to be attending the session. To Said Hassan's amazement when seeing

Herter he volunteered to spy for USA on all UN delegations. When asked for an explanation he said that because of our dependence on USA it was a good thing to oblige them. Khrushchev, of course, abused Bhutto and said that if Pakistan should look towards India or Afghanistan, Soviets would take our eyes out. He told Khrushchev not to get angry. Pakistan was ready to quit the pacts. Meeting with Macmillan could not be arranged. Instead the British representative, Lord Gore, invited Bhutto to lunch on which he gave a speech extolling the role of Commonwealth and said that Pakistan had no use for the Soviets or the USA. Said Hassan said that he felt ashamed and came to the conclusion that the man was completely unreliable, double faced and lacking in integrity and character.

Father invited his cabinet to lunch one day. When the ministers began to leave, Father asked Bhutto and Shoaib to stay back and then asked them both to resign. He promised Shoaib a job in the World Bank, and offered Bhutto to be Ambassador to any country he wished. Shoaib accepted the offer made to him; Bhutto declined the offer, insisting upon being re-inducted into the cabinet. He literally begged me to get him reinstated and kept asking why Father was annoyed with him. He insisted that Father come to Larkana for a shoot and stay with him. Father refused.

There was much pomp in Bhutto's mannerisms. On foreign visits with Father, he would be uncomfortable sitting in a PIA commercial flight, even in the first-class section with a delegation of not more than ten persons. He wanted to travel in private planes and preferred that the President's bodyguards and lancers leave first and line up outside before the President exited the plane.

Once towards the end of 1965 when we were both in the National Assembly, Zulfi told me that Father was like a banyan tree—spread wide, giving plenty of shade, but with nothing growing under it. I asked him what exactly he meant by this analogy. He told me it meant that the President should nominate a successor for himself. I informed Father that his ministers feel

he is a banyan tree and that he should nominate a successor. Father inquired as to who had said this, and I told him. To that he replied, 'It is Zulfi and Mahmud Haroon I am grooming, but if I nominate them now they will be targetted all the time. In any case, what guarantee is there that anyone nominated by me would win or be accepted?'

In contrast to this is the instance when Zulfi went to London after the 1965 war where he met Major General Iskander Mirza, who asked him: 'Zulfi, you know the size of India. Pakistan could not have defeated India, then why did you start this war?'

Bhutto's reply was: 'There was no other way to weaken Ayub Khan and remove him.'

Much has been said and written about the Tashkent Declaration. The declaration was drafted by the Foreign Ministry, approved by the Foreign Minister, and finally presented to the President for his consent. The Tashkent Declaration was the responsibility of the Foreign Minister—who was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. There is a photograph of him clapping while the agreement was being signed.

The Soviet leader, Aleksei Kosygin, wanted one-on-one talks with Father in Tashkent. A meeting between the two was arranged, but Zulfi wanted to participate. Father told him not to be a fool.

Bhutto made the 1965 war and the Tashkent Declaration his breaking point with Father. He claimed that a secret deal had been made between Father and the Soviets in which Kashmir had been sold out. He made a hue-and-cry about exposing this 'secret agreement' and kept threatening to 'spill the beans'. Bhutto evidently forgot all about the 'secret agreement' of Tashkent and the claims of a 'thousand year war' with India when he went to sit at the feet of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi after becoming Chief Martial Law Administrator.

The Tashkent Declaration mentions Kashmir as a dispute to be settled. Later, Bhutto also signed the Simla Agreement which refers to Kashmir as an issue to be settled between India and

Pakistan. He thus weakened the prospects for a definitive resolution to the Kashmir problem. Ever since Bhutto signed the Simla Agreement, the Indians immediately objected to the use of the word 'dispute' in reference to Kashmir and point to the Simla Agreement as justification.

After his break with Father, Bhutto suddenly became a popular leader. He left Rawalpindi by train, gathering crowds wherever he went. The Nawab of Kalabagh—who was the Governor of West Pakistan then—came to see Father, and said, 'Khan-ji, look the other way and I will wring Bhutto's neck.' 'Nawab Sahib,' replied Father, 'if even a hair on Bhutto's body is harmed, I will hold you personally responsible.'

Towards the end of 1968, Father's government was under mounting political pressure. There were demonstrations on the streets and Bhutto was emerging as the leading figure in the opposition. At the time I used to have open-house sessions at my residence in Karachi, to which many Muslim League workers and people seeking help mostly related to things like finding jobs, getting transfers etc., would come. Once, after everyone had left, I noticed that a man in a suit was still sitting quietly in the corner. He then left without uttering a word. This incident repeated itself for a further four days until Mr Iqbal Qayyum, the representative of General Motors in Pakistan, called me up and told me that a relative of his had been visiting my house for the past few days, and asked me to set aside some time to see him privately.

The next day I called this gentleman in after everyone had left. He introduced himself as Masood Mahmood, a police officer, and said how impressed he was with Father, and wanted to remove Father's 'problem.' 'What problem, exactly?' I asked him.

'Bhutto,' he said. If the President would personally ask him and give him protection, he would get rid of Bhutto.

I then repeated to him what Father had said to the Nawab of Kalabagh. Masood Mahmood left very disappointed.

When Bhutto came to power, the same Masood Mahmood worked his way into Bhutto's favour and became the Director General of the Federal Security Force, an organization raised to intimidate the opposition and counter the army. Bhutto asked Masood Mahmood to rid him of Ahmad Raza Kasuri, a member of the National Assembly who was being openly critical of Bhutto. In the ambush that Masood Mahmood planned for the purpose, Ahmad Raza Kasuri survived and his father was killed instead. Ahmad Raza Kasuri filed an F.I.R. against Bhutto and the case was taken to court after Bhutto's removal. Bhutto and some officers of the Federal Security Force were sentenced to death by hanging. Masood Mahmood escaped the others' miserable fate by turning state approver.

In early 1971, Zulfi was in Le Gourmet, a famous restaurant in Karachi, with a friend. He had had a lot to drink. There was a stage-show going on when Lieutenant Colonel Shams-ul-Zaman entered and sat at a table next to Zulfi. Both Zulfi and Lieutenant Colonel Shams—(everyone who knew him called him Shams)—took to commenting on the belly-dancer's performance and also began hurling abuses at each other.

As Zulfi got up to leave, he passed Lieutenant Colonel Shams's table and said to him: 'I will fix you when I come into power.'

Lieutenant Colonel Shams was a short, slight but also a hot-headed man, especially where drinks were involved. He got up and said: 'Why wait till you come into power? Why not now?'

He punched Zulfi on the jaw, and knocked him to the floor. Zulfi got up staggering, and said: 'Now I certainly will fix you when I come into power.'

Lieutenant Colonel Shams punched him again, and again Zulfi was knocked to the floor. Everyone in the room simply looked on, frozen.

Zulfi got up, dusted himself and left. Lieutenant Colonel Shams stayed behind to enjoy the night.

Lieutenant Colonel Shams continued to serve in the army even after Bhutto came to power. For despite the bully that Bhutto

was, he did not risk picking another fight with Lieutenant Colonel Shams.

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When Bhutto came to Karachi in early 1973 on one of his tours, I was called in to see him at his house in Clifton. Immediately after the pleasantries, he accused me of working against him. When I asked him what had made him suspect this, he told me about a report he had been given about a dinner at Air Marshal Asghar Khan's brother's house at which Lieutenant General (retd) Attiqur Rahman was also present. According to Bhutto, I had said to Lieutenant General (retd) Attiq, 'Now that the army is with us, we will remove the bastard.'

I told Bhutto that retired generals do not have troops, and for that matter he might be disappointed that his name never figured in our conversation. The general and I had been discussing how to raise funds for our POWs in India. Besides, I asked him, hadn't the intelligence agencies made all kinds of false claims on his behalf when he was in the opposition? Yes, he said, and cursed the intelligence agencies.

Bhutto's promise of *roti, kapra aur makan* led people in the Punjab to expect that the properties of the rich would be distributed amongst them. During Bhutto's rule, ironically, basic items such as *ghee*, sugar, kerosene oil and flour, were difficult to obtain and were instead being sold on the black market. The 'fair price' shops and ration depots had fallen into the hands of the PPP workers.

During the election fever in 1970, the PPP workers would shout, '*Dal Roti Khaingay Bhutto ko Lianengay!*' [We will make sure Bhutto comes to power, even if we have to eat *daal* and *roti*!]. In the mid-70s, when I was at the Karachi harbour and boarded a boat with a PPP flag hoisted on it, I asked the boatman the price of *daal*. He told me it was Rs16 a kilo. What happened

to the *roti, kapra aur makan* promised to the poor? I exclaimed. The boatman let out a volley of abuse in response.

During Bhutto's tenure as Prime Minister, the opposition was kept under very tight surveillance, as were almost all government officials. Everyone was convinced that their houses and telephones were being tapped and that their mail was being scanned. Once during lunch with Aslam Khan Khattak, the Governor of the NWFP in 1974, the discussion came around to the complaint that the by-election in Karak was being rigged by the PPP. The Governor looked around to ensure that no waiters were present. Then with his right hand he mimicked the pulling of a trigger. He thought it was the only solution to get rid of Bhutto, he suggested.

Bhutto would never refrain from taking a dig or making a pun at the expense of his colleagues. Whilst addressing a public meeting at Saidu Sharif, he said that Bangladesh wanted him to apologise for the killings in East Pakistan. He then raised his voice and said, 'I will not apologise to them! But if they insist,'—and here he put his hand on Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan's shoulder,—'If they insist, the Khan can apologise.' This was a reference to Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan's release from jail after he had written to Father requesting to be released.

When the 1973 Constitution was passed, Bhutto claimed on the floor of the National Assembly that it had been passed unanimously. On this, Ahmad Raza Kasuri—a PPP member—got up and interrupted him to say that it had not been passed unanimously. Bhutto turned on him, but Mr Kasuri held his ground. The fact is that if a bill is passed unanimously, then the Speaker announces as much—and this is usually followed by loud desk-thumping. On this occasion however, the Speaker announced that the Bill was 'passed as amended', meaning that it had undergone some changes after being put to the Assembly. Nevertheless, it is true that the constitution was passed with the consensus of the vast majority.



On assuming power, Dr Mubashir Hasan—Bhutto's Finance Minister—announced the devaluation of the Pakistani currency by 132 per cent. The expectation was that exports would increase significantly as a result of this move, but they did not—there was no exportable surplus. On the other hand, imports became very expensive and debts rose steeply. Earlier, due to the Bonus Voucher scheme, the government had fixed the value of the US dollar at Rs3.72, but now it was close to Rs10.

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The business community invited Bhutto to a dinner at the Beach Luxury Hotel in Karachi. They wanted his protection, as they were fearful of the nationalization of the textile industry. In Bhutto's address to them, he warned them that he was fully aware of the identities of those who opposed him and his policies, and if this kind of talk continued to circulate within the business community, he would nationalize the textile mills as well. This sent a chill down the spine of the textile mill owners, who from that day onwards did not modernize their mills for fear of nationalization. Whereas we were once the leaders in cotton textile production in the region, now many countries have overtaken us in this department. Till this day, we have not overcome the detrimental policies of the PPP government, particularly with regards to nationalization.

Towards the end of Bhutto's regime, people would have to be herded to Bhutto's public meetings; sometimes even marriage parties travelling on the road would be forcibly directed to the rallies. People would hold out medicine bottles to tell him that their families were sick, some would take off their shoes and hold them up to show him their displeasure. 'I know things have become expensive,' Bhutto would respond. 'And I will solve these problems, I assure you.'

In direct contrast to the hardships people were facing, was the stunning fact that a veterinarian—whose task was to trim the

nails and cut the hair of Bhutto's two poodles—would frequently be flown in from Karachi, and lodged in the Intercontinental Hotel, Rawalpindi. All this was done at state expense. Bhutto was fond of Royal Salute whiskey, which in those days cost Rs1,200 a bottle. In public meetings, he would declare: 'I drink alcohol but not the blood of the poor.' His shirts were bought from a shop on Gernyn Street, London, at £40 apiece. The cost of his Havana cigars was out of this world. He had Rs70 lakh sanctioned from the state treasury for re-doing his house in Larkana by declaring it one of the official residences of the Prime Minister.

Bhutto was all set to be the Prime Minister for twenty years; he ordered new crockery and cutlery for the Prime Minister's House, on which he engraved not the crest of the Prime Minister but the PPP's symbol of the sword. After he was removed, all these extravagant items were stowed away somewhere, never to be used again.

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A military coup took place in Turkey on 27 May 1960. The military government decided to try President Celal Bayar, Prime Minister Adnan Menderes and two other ministers. Celal Bayar was released as he was over 65 years of age, and thus under Turkish law he could not be hanged. The rest, however, were sentenced to death by hanging. Father sent Bhutto to the military government with a letter requesting them not to hang Adnan Menderes and the other ministers. He pleaded that they be sent to Pakistan and he would ensure that they did not take part in Turkish politics and would be returned to Turkey only on the request of their government. If they were hanged, insisted Father, the Turkish political system would be held hostage for a long time to come. The Turkish military government did not respond to Father's request and hanged the former prime minister and two ministers.

The fate of Bhutto unfortunately in the minds of the military government was it seemed sealed. A serving Lieutenant General told me that even if the supreme court acquitted Bhutto, he would shoot him with his own hands.

Had Father been alive when Bhutto was to be hanged, there is no question that he would have strongly opposed his execution. I sent a letter of deep regret and sorrow to Nusrat Bhutto on the eve of her husband's tragic death.

### **General Mohammad Yahya Khan**

When General Mohammad Musa retired, there were three names under consideration in Father's mind for the positions of Commander-in-Chief: Major General Mohammad Yahya Khan, Major General Abdul Hamid and Major General Mohammad Sarfraz. Amongst them, Major General Abdul Hamid was a little ahead of the others in staff work and command, and he had significant battle experience from the Second World War. He was a quiet, reserved person, who would speak only when spoken to—and when he spoke, he was precise and articulate and would not get carried away by the sound of his own voice, as so many do.

The second favourite was Major General Yahya Khan. He was a good planner and he had seen action during the Second World War. (He had been captured by the Germans in that war). He was an extrovert, and fond of women and wine. Be it any kind of event or function, he was always the centre of attention. He performed well when assigned tasks, but he was not much of an original thinker. Father was of the opinion that Major General Yahya Khan had to have someone directing him in order to get the best out of him.

In the final run, it was Major General Yahya Khan who was appointed Commander-in-Chief. His name was not recommended

by General Mohammad Musa who saw him to have close contacts with Bhutto.

On my return from the United States in late May 1971, I went to thank General Yahya Khan for the arrangements he made for Father's open-heart surgery at the Cleveland Clinic. (However, we had paid all the travel, hotel and medical bills ourselves). Just before leaving, I said to him:

'Sir, the person you are grooming in West Pakistan will turn state approver against you.'

He replied: '*Bachu*,'—which was his term of affection—'Tell the Field Marshal that I am well aware of Bhutto's intentions and he need not worry.'

I told him that Father had not expressed concern; it was me, expressing my own fears. It turns out that they were not unfounded.

After the fall of Dhaka, General Yahya Khan was forced to hand over power to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. General Yahya was first put under house arrest in Shangla and then some days later the authorities went to my house on top of Shimla hill in Abbottabad and put a notice on the door saying that they had requisitioned it with all furniture and fittings; they were going to lodge General Yahya Khan in it during his house arrest. When I heard of this, I called up Bhutto and he cancelled the preparations. I was living in Karachi in those days and used that house as our summer home.

The Hamood-ur-Rehman Commission (which was set up to enquire into the circumstances in which the Commander, Eastern Command, surrendered and the members of the armed forces of Pakistan under his command laid down their arms and a cease fire was ordered along the borders of West Pakistan and India and along the ceasefire line in the state of Jammu and Kashmir) asked General Yahya Khan to appear before it. There were numerous tales of the General's affairs with women. When the commission broached the subject, General Yahya Khan was smoking his cigarette, exhaling slowly. Lieutenant General (retd)

Altaf Qadir asked him whether it was true that he had been involved in the accounts they had just presented to him. Without batting an eyelid, the General said, 'Toffee,'—(This was Altaf Qadir's nickname in the army)—'I never called any one of them, their husbands brought them to me. How is it my fault?'

### Amir Mohammad Khan (Nawab of Kalabagh)

The Nawab of Kalabagh, Amir Mohammad Khan, was well educated and a good administrator. He was also the Chairman of the Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC). Father was very fond of the Nawab of Kalabagh, and made him the Governor of West Pakistan in the early sixties. He proved to be a very effective governor.

The Nawab knew about the family backgrounds of many people, and could produce a very detailed *shajra* (family tree), highlighting both the good and the bad about each person. He had a long string of enemies and was usually successful at forcing them into submission. He was a straightforward man who was keen to do his job well, and always said that he was prepared to leave the post and Governor House at a moment's notice if his work was not satisfactory.

Most of the Pakistan Muslim League top leaders who formed the PML (Council) were in fact kept away from joining the PML (Convention) by Governor Nawab Amir Mohammad Khan who knew them personally. These top leaders of the PML (Council) claimed to be fighting for democracy and removal of a military government but no sooner did they get the opportunity than they were breaking the doors to join as ministers or advisors to the martial law governments of General Mohammad Yahya Khan and General Ziaul Haq. Mr Mumtaz Daultana had accepted the office of High Commissioner to Britain under Bhutto, and Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan joined the PPP. So much of principles and democrats. I am sure most of the

PML (Council) stalwarts would have joined the PM (Convention) had Father offered them some office and had Governor Amir Mohammad Khan not stood in their way.

A by-election was being held in Karachi in mid-1966. Habibullah Paracha, owner of Paracha Textile Mills, was nominated to fight for a seat in the National Assembly on a Muslim League Convention ticket. Initially Nawab Sahib was in favour of the nomination in front of Father, but later he convinced the Jam of Lasbela and Mahmud Haroon, both provincial ministers, to oppose and defeat Habibullah Paracha. When they were successful in doing so, Habibullah Paracha went to Rawalpindi to meet Father and tell him that he had been defeated by his own governor. Father was extremely upset and told Nawab Sahib that if he did not want to support Habibullah Paracha he should have said so at the outset and someone else could have been given the ticket. Nawab Sahib was unable to come up with a reasonable defence for himself. He did not divulge that his opposition to Habibullah Paracha dated back to 1932 when both were shareholders in a colliery. The Nawab Sahib had felt he had not received his due share and he took his revenge thirty-five years later by defeating him in the elections.

After this incident, Father could no longer trust the Nawab, and said as much to him. The Nawab resigned and left for Kalabagh. Before leaving Governor's House in Lahore he called on Father and said, 'Khan-ji, I will need your protection, there is turmoil within my immediate family. Family members are instigating my relatives against me.'

Father was worried for him but did not realize the gravity of the situation.

### **Lieutenant General Mohammad Azam Khan**

Lieutenant General Mohammad Azam Khan was Father's friend from their childhood. Their fathers too were in the Hodson's

Horse Regiment together and good friends. Their closeness is apparent from the fact that when my grandfather, Risaldar Major Mir Dad Khan, named his fourth son after Mohammad Akram Khan, Azam Khan's father. Azam Khan would refer to Father as *Lala* (elder brother).

Lieutenant General Azam Khan, who was then the GOC 10 Division in Lahore, called the Commander-in-Chief's House at about 1 a.m. one night in April 1958. I picked up the phone. Lieutenant General Azam Khan told me that a company of the Indian Army had come and occupied a *bela* in the river Sutlej, and he wanted instructions from the C-in-C. I woke Father up. When I explained the situation to him, he responded: 'Tell Azam he should know what to do rather than ask for orders. He should clear the Indians and send the report of his action in the morning.'

Lieutenant General Azam Khan did just that, and handled the matter without any problems. Lieutenant Colonel Mahmood Jan attacked and cleared the Indians.

Lieutenant General Azam Khan was inducted into the federal cabinet when martial law was declared in 1958. He was needed in East Pakistan, as he was a workaholic and strong as a horse. In East Pakistan he became immensely popular. He would always be on the move, meeting the poor, even wading through water when needed, and encouraging the people. Threatened by his popularity, East Pakistani politicians at the time began demanding that an East Pakistani be appointed governor. Lieutenant General Azam Khan thus had to be called back. As is the wont, the incident was converted into a rumour that Father had recalled him because he felt threatened by Azam Khan's popularity.

Replacing Lieutenant General Azam Khan as Governor of East Pakistan with Monem Khan was not a wise decision. Monem Khan was a local politician with limited support and influence in the province. It was beyond his capacity to govern a turbulent province. When criticism against Monem Khan grew, he should

have been replaced. I had gone to meet Governor Monem Khan in Dhaka and asked him about the new provincial cabinet which was just sworn in. He said it was a *koilla gach* (bunch of bananas), some were yellow (cowards) some green (inexperienced) and some rotten. He may have been loyal to Father but was no match for opposition politicians like Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Maulana Bhashani. Quite a number of Muslim Leaguers were kept away by Governor Monem Khan from joining the Convention Muslim League. They then naturally joined the Council Muslim League.

He was wise not to have entered active politics.

Lieutenant General Azam Khan would visit Father often at his house in Islamabad. I was fond of him.



## PRISONER IN A DEATH CELL

AMONGST BHUTTO'S FIRST acts as Prime Minister was the arrest of three leading businessmen, Ahmad Dawood, Kamaruddin Valika, and Lieutenant General (retd) Habibullah Khan, my father-in-law. They were shown on television behind bars, ostensibly to send a clear message to all businessmen and industrialists that they could be targetted and their industries nationalized. Banks, flour mills and even ginning factories were nationalized and most entrepreneurs left the country. The industries which were not nationalized were allowed to run into the ground; they were not modernized or upgraded and soon went into heavy losses. Further, the massive devaluation of the Pakistani rupee by nearly 132 per cent caused prices to shoot up, imports to become expensive and the foreign exchange reserves to fall. Ration cards, permits and black market dealings were the order of the day.

Bhutto had cultivated contacts in the armed forces and used them to the maximum before coming into power. He knew that the army played an important role in the politics of Pakistan. This is clear from how he pitted the army against the Awami League in East Pakistan and caused the army a defeat at the hands of India.

Interestingly, after the 1971 war and Bhutto's coming to power, stories of the generals' affairs with women began to appear frequently in the newspapers, some accompanied by pictures. The term 'fat and flabby' became synonymous with the generals. The common headlines were that the generals had failed the country and were a disgrace to the uniform they wore.

Aware of the army's power, Bhutto did away with the designation of Commander-in-Chief and instead introduced the title of Chief of Army Staff. He tried to split the army into four commands so as to ensure that all four were not under one person's control and so that the Chief of Army Staff alone could not impose martial law. Lieutenant General Gul Hassan was appointed Chief of Army Staff, but a few months later Bhutto called him to his office for a meeting, after which he was taken to Lahore and made to resign. Lieutenant General Gul Hassan was called the 'Father of the Armoured Corps', and yet nobody made a sound upon his removal. It was the indifference of the officers that made Lieutenant General Gul Hassan particularly bitter; he went to the extent of saying publicly that he had wasted his life serving and commanding people who were purely selfish.

Bhutto also removed Air Chief Rahim Khan for not attacking the barracks of the police who were on strike in Peshawar.

\* \* \* \*

A police state was in the making. Political opponents were picked up and sent to the infamous Dalai Camp in Azad Kashmir, which was outside the jurisdiction of Pakistani courts. During Bhutto's first term in office as civilian chief martial law administrator and prime minister, he was tied to the party members who had been elected. In the March 1977 elections, however, he brought to power the landed gentry which he had at first opposed when he was campaigning. A German diplomat in Islamabad commented that it seemed as though Bhutto implemented the *Mein Kampf* (the book written by Hitler) a page per day. He raised the Federal Security Force and put it under Masood Mahmood, a scoundrel of the first order, to counter the army. (This was the same Masood Mahmood who had earlier volunteered to kill Bhutto.) The army did not object to Bhutto's reckless behaviour, so

disheartened were they by their defeat in East Pakistan and incarceration as prisoners of war in India.

In order to establish his control, Bhutto created conditions that forced the provincial governments in the NWFP and Balochistan to resign. He resorted to all kinds of methods to ensure that opponents were kept in check. In 1973, some junior officers planned a coup to overthrow the prime minister, his cabinet and some senior generals. This plan was revealed by mistake, when the list of officers was given to the wrong captain who in turn handed it over to the Army Chief, General Tikka Khan. Most of the officers were tried in the Attock Fort, and convicted. The plan had been to pick up troops from Lahore, fly them in a C-130 to Chaklala, and stage their coup. I went through this coup plan in 1977 with Lieutenant Colonel Aleem Afridi, who was among the officers convicted for plotting the coup and had been brought to Peshawar jail (where I was being held at the time for various charges under the Defence of Pakistan Rule 42 and Section 124-A). I pointed out various mistakes they had made in the planning. Ironically, all of these officers had been to very good institutions where plans, maps, movements are planned. However, they had come up with such a complicated plan that it was bound to fail even if all the conspirators had not been arrested beforehand.

Business was slowing down in Karachi and elsewhere in Pakistan. My wife and I decided to move to Abbottabad so that we could be near Father, who was by then quite unwell. The children were young, so the move would not have much of an effect on them, we agreed. And if I was going to involve myself in politics, the best place to be based would be in my hometown.

And so in 1973, we shifted from Karachi to Abbottabad.

\* \* \* \*

The POWs in Indian camps were to be released after the Simla accord was signed on 1 July 1972. India had planned to keep

them long enough for them to have to undergo refresher training once they came back to Pakistan. At this point, a new unfortunate trend crept into the army—the ones who had remained in West Pakistan were ‘us’ and the POWs became ‘they’.

In the past if any officer was asked what his dream was, he would say it was to hoist the Pakistani flag on the Red Fort in Delhi. Everyone was ready to take on India. And after 1971, the most anyone would be willing to say is that we could fight a defensive war for a short period against India.

Upon his return from a POW camp, Lieutenant General A.A.K. Niazi, Commander of the Eastern Command, came to see my mother. She asked him: ‘Niazi, people say that you did not fight in East Pakistan. Is that true?’

‘Ma-ji, who says I or my troops did not fight?’ retorted the general. ‘For nine months we were carrying out operations. In the monsoons, our trousers were shredded into shorts. Our *shaheed* were buried where they laid down their lives. We did not allow any Pakistani formation to be overrun by the Indians and we inflicted heavy casualties on the Indians and the Mukti Bahini. There was no leave or chance of reinforcements coming for us, yet they say we did not fight. These generals did not go to East Pakistan. As a simple soldier, I took on an impossible task... Ma-ji, the ones who say I did not fight are the ones who stayed here in West Pakistan with their wives in the comfort of their homes.’

\* \* \* \*

President Fazal Elahi Chaudhary came to inspect the parade at the PMA Kakul on 24 October 1974. He stayed on for a few days in the Governor House in Abbottabad. My house was on one hill and the Governor House on another hill a mile away, the road to which went past my house. For two days I observed that except for the local administration no one was going to meet the President. One morning, still in my pyjamas, I called the

President's military secretary and told him that the President and I had been colleagues in the 1965 Assembly, and since he had come to my home town, I wanted to call on him. I specifically mentioned that the visit was not to be about work or politics. Within fifteen minutes the military secretary called me back saying that I should come straight away.

On arrival I was taken to the sunroom, where the President was sitting alone. I greeted him and asked him how he was.

'Not well,' he replied.

'What's wrong?' I asked.

'Depression. I am depressed.'

'You? You have depression!' I exclaimed, unable to hide my surprise.

'What do you expect? You are the first person who is not an official who has come to see me.'

'Sir, as the Deputy Speaker you were a treat to watch in the National Assembly! You were always the centre of attention!'

He sighed and we drank our coffee largely in silence. I left feeling very sorry for him.

When I went to see President Fazal Elahi next after the removal of Bhutto, he reminded me of our meeting in Abbottabad and told me that Bhutto had started making inquiries afterwards, presuming that my visit was a move against him.

\* \* \* \*

All Muslim League groups had received a thrashing in the 1970 elections. The Qayyum League alone managed to win some seats in the NWFP. Qayyum Khan won the elections in Peshawar and in Haripur, defeating my uncle, Sardar Bahadur Khan. I had not contested the elections of 1970.

After their defeat in the elections, the three Muslim League groups merged to form the Pakistan Muslim League (PML). The party remained largely inactive though; Chaudhary Zahoor Elahi had been arrested and sentenced to prison for four years on

charges of stealing three buffaloes and making an anti-government remark in a hotel lobby. After witnessing the fate of Zahoor Elahi, the PML was not prepared to come out against the government. Still, a platform was required from which to mount opposition against Bhutto and the PPP, and at that time only the Tehrik-i-Istiqlal party—organized by Air Marshal Asghar Khan—seemed feasible. While leading a semi-retired life in Abbottabad, I prepared a manifesto which I then discussed with Asghar Khan. He agreed to adopt the manifesto. I thus joined the Tehrik-i-Istiqlal, and was elected President of the NWFP chapter in 1975.

We started our campaign in Hazara, which was a predominantly Muslim League area. However, all Muslim League members, as well as the independent members, had joined the PPP. My speeches drew people's attention, as they were very clear and direct. It was for these speeches that I was charged under Section 42 of the Defence of Pakistan Rules

Bhutto, I caution you! You are acting in such a manner that your end will be like Mussolini, Hitler and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's. Their bodies lay around unattended. [I would describe in gory detail what happened to each of these leaders].

You say that you do not drink the blood of the poor? A pint of blood in any hospital can be bought for Rs250. You drink Royal Salute whiskey, which costs Rs1,200 a bottle.

You say that you take only Rs1 per month as pay from the government? Your expenses exceed the pay and allowances of a prime minister by Rs20 lakhs per month.

You have two poodles. A veterinary doctor comes from Karachi by air, is made to stay in the Intercontinental Hotel just to trim the nails and clean the eyes of your dogs at government expense.

You are not providing new fighters to the Air Force. They call their planes 'flying coffins'.

You have been made the colonel-in-chief of the Armoured Corps. For the first time in the army's history, a civilian has been made a colonel-in-chief. You tried to don a uniform. Beware it will be they who will come for you.

Where are the 7 million dollars given for the Besham earthquake? They are in foreign accounts. The people of Besham have not seen the money.

You ask what Ayub Khan has done for Pakistan? Ayub Khan built the Tarbela Bund, Mangla Bund, Chashma Bund and Khanpur Bund. In your government, there is *Atta Bund*, *Chini Bund*, *Teil Bund*, and *Dalda Bund*. [*Bund* can mean both 'dam', and 'shutdown' or 'ceasure'. There were wide scale shortages during the Bhutto period.]

The intelligence agencies hounded the Opposition. In addition to tapping telephones, opening our mail, and posting agents outside our houses, the agencies had code names for each of their 'suspects'. My code name was SABRA 7, as was disclosed to me by one of their agents in Lahore (who was from Haripur, in fact). When I landed at the Lahore airport, the man approached me and asked me to give him details of my schedule in Lahore. 'This way,' he said, 'I will not be following you and it will make things easier for both me and you.'

I happily gave him my itinerary. Later that evening, he cordially saw me off at the airport. I think he was trying to be helpful. By now I could with my intelligence training pick up agents on my trail.

In a public address in Mandi Bahaiddin in February 1976, I exposed the fact that the three oil tankers that had been purchased (for a rather hefty sum) by the Minister for Communications for the National Shipping Corporation, were simply scrap. For this statement, I was charged under Defence of Pakistan Rule 42—for 'inciting people against the government'.

In the first week of May 1976, a warrant was issued for my arrest. I was taken from my residence in Abbottabad and we drove in my car through the night. We reached the SHO's house in Mandi Bahaiddin, had breakfast with him, and I was produced before a magistrate and then taken to the Gujrat jail. The superintendent of the jail kept me in his office till evening, when

I was sent to the class 'C' barracks. The room was full and had double bunks. I pulled out a book to read. Some of the inmates called out to me: 'Khan Sahib! Have you come here to read books? Talk to us!'

So I put my book away and sat up on the top bunk which had been allotted to me. I embarked on a tirade against Bhutto, and they were amused.

In the night, I awoke suddenly to a persistent patting noise. Initially, I thought it was pigeons being disturbed by a cat or something, but the sound continued till the early hours of the morning. When it was finally light, I figured out the source: in the cell across from me, an enormous man was lying on his back with two people massaging him. It turned out that the man was a local *pir* who had been arrested for murder.

The next day, I was moved to the class 'B' barracks which had approximately eight people. Some of the inmates were retired army personnel. The superintendent came in with his staff for inspection, and all of us stood at the foot of our beds. The superintendent said, 'There will be no political discussion in this barrack. If I receive any reports of this kind of activity, you all will immediately be sent back to the class "C" barracks.'

'Superintendent sahib,' I responded. 'I have come to jail on political charges and it is not something I am ashamed of. I will talk politics and I will attack Bhutto; do as you please.'

The superintendent quietly left the barracks. It turned out that he was a good man. He tried to help me out as much as possible during my time in the Gujrat jail.

As a class 'B' detainee, it was possible for me to obtain food from outside. My food was brought in every day from Chaudhry Zahoor Elahi's residence, while he himself was in Hyderabad jail undergoing four years imprisonment.

There was a lot of security around the Gujrat jail. Once it so happened that a *malang* who would periodically come to my father's house to ask for money, appeared before the jail gates. The intelligence agencies thought he was going around the jail



to survey it for a possible rescue attempt. Security was beefed up further.

My bail petition was heard by the Lahore High Court on 12 May 1976. The government was opposing the petition. In conclusion, the judge proclaimed: 'Gohar Ayub is publicly stating that a minister is being accused of corruption with regards to the purchase of oil tankers for the Pakistan National Shipping Corporation, which has caused losses to Pakistan. The government's duty is to root out corruption. The government should be asking Mr Gohar Ayub Khan for information on this matter, but instead they have pressed charges on him and detained him in jail. How will corruption be eradicated if this is the way the government will act?'

I was granted bail the next morning. A car was sent for me and I drove to Abbottabad, knowing that a stream of charges had been framed against me in the NWFP. A public meeting was planned for 23 June 1976, to be held in Balakot. It was to be addressed by Air Marshal Asghar Khan and myself, as well as various other leaders. Upon hearing of this meeting, the local administration in Balakot declared the imposition of Section 144, which prohibits the gathering of more than four persons in any public space. Drummers went around Balakot announcing the ban.

When we arrived in Balakot, there were large numbers of people in and around the bazaar but no one in the ground designated for the meeting. People cheered when they saw us entering the bazaar, and they began to follow our vehicles. We decided to hold the meeting anyway, and chose an under-construction mosque as the new venue. Seating arrangements were made in no time, and a public address system sent for. The place was completely full.

The speeches began. I launched a blistering attack on Bhutto and his government and how much hardship they had caused the people. Around fifteen minutes into my speech, the assistant commissioner and the deputy superintendent of the police

(DSP) came into the mosque and planted themselves right in front of me. The DSP held up the order for the imposition of Section 144 for me to read. I was standing about three feet above him and bent down so as to read what he was holding up. The people behind me pushed forward to see what was going on and I was pushed off the stage and landed right on top of the DSP. The DSP fell, and a stampede ensued. The bazaar was abuzz with the news that I had beaten up the DSP.

When I returned to Abbottabad after the meeting I told my wife that it was very likely that I would be picked up by the police that night, so she should get my things ready and pack enough for a very long stay in jail. The special court (before which my charges in the NWFP were to be presented) had already been constituted in Peshawar, and everything was ready for yet another trial. Bhutto had had enough, it seems, and ordered the president of the special court (who was also the secretary of the NWFP Assembly) to speed up the hearings and give me the maximum punishment in all cases.

As expected, the police showed up at midnight. I came out to meet the police officer, who told me to accompany him as I was under arrest.

'Where is the arrest warrant?' I asked him.

'I do not have it, I was given verbal orders,' was his reply.

'I will not go with you unless you have an arrest warrant. I do not know who you are, so I advise you to go back and bring an arrest warrant with you when you come next.'

The police officer and his escort left and duly returned a few hours later with an arrest warrant, charging me with the violation of Section 144. I was taken to Haripur jail where I was kept for three days and then moved to Peshawar and put in solitary confinement. That cell was a jail within a jail. My family was not allowed to know where I was.

My first night in the cell, the light bulb was kept illuminated throughout the night, making the cell hot and humid. I must have been extremely tired, for I was asleep on the bare floor with

my *chapals* under my head when I was woken by the noise of someone banging on the iron bars of the cell door. I got up and went to see who it was. The Inspector General, the jail superintendent, and their staff were all standing there. The Inspector General asked me how I was. I told him I was well, and asked him what brought him to the cell. He began mumbling something that sounded apologetic, but I cut him off. 'General Sahib,' I said to him, 'I have been a soldier and been to institutions which prepared me for the worst. As a sportsman, I have been hunting in the Khunjerab Pass for Marco Polo sheep and in the marshes of the Sunderbans of East Pakistan for tigers. The conditions in a death cell are comfortable for me. Do not waste your time. If there is anything I can do for you, let me know; I am in a position to do it even from this death cell.'

The men lowered their eyes and left. I heard someone saying, 'Let's go. You don't know who we are talking to.'

\* \* \* \*

While in jail, I willed myself not to fall sick so that I would not have to ask for help from the jail authorities or the government. I would bathe in a corner inside my cell. Hessian on a wooden frame with two bricks placed (to squat on), served as the toilet. Even this I was prepared to bear cheerfully; I would bear all discomfort with dignity. And sure enough, I remained in good health and refused to complain. This annoyed the Chief Minister and Mr Bhutto no end, who had thought that I would soon beg their pardon and sign a '*maafi-nama*'.

My lawyers moved a bail application before the special court in Peshawar on 8 July 1976. The court rejected my bail application—a court which had not even heard the case, examined witnesses, or gone through any of the required procedures had found me guilty. But such were the liberties given to these 'special courts'; all they were required to do further

was slap verdicts of five to seven years imprisonment on every case under the Defence of Pakistan Rule 42.

The writ of habeas corpus which requires that the accused be brought before a judge—used mainly to protect against illegal imprisonment—was then moved before the Peshawar High Court. But no judge would hear my case. They all made up some excuse or the other: some were on their way to Islamabad, others had to go to Torkham to receive guests. I got fed up and sent a message to Justice Safdar Shah, whom I had helped in Karachi. He finally heard my case and ruled that the special court could continue to hear the charges but would not announce the final judgment till the writ of habeas corpus was disposed of. It was possible then that the High Court would give me bail after hearing the writ.

There were nearly sixteen cases against me under Defence of Pakistan Rule 42 and two under Section 124-A, the latter in connection with 'armed revolt against the state'. A few days after my visit to the High Court, the Law Minister, Mr Hafeez Pirzada, introduced an amendment in the constitution which took away the powers of the High Courts to give a stay order to any proceedings of a special court. Now it was such that the special court had to pass a verdict, and only then could I approach the High Court to contest the charges. If I was convicted in all the cases that had been drawn up against me, the total sentence could run up to 162 years.

I then had to try my best to postpone the decision of the special court. I gave lists of approximately thirty-five witnesses from far-flung areas. The court and administration found it very difficult to track down these people and bring them to the Peshawar special court. The cases continued, and the government officials gave their statements. The Balakot meeting case came forward and the magistrate on duty was asked where he was when I had started my speech. He said he was about thirty yards away. 'Did you remain there, and could you hear him?' asked my lawyer.

'I moved closer to him to hear him better,' was the reply.

'Why did you want to hear him better?'

'Well, because he was saying *mazedar* things.'

Everyone present in court burst out laughing.

In another speech in which I had said that the air force F-86 Sabre jets were flying coffins, the prosecution wanted to prove that I was inciting the air force against the government. A tape recording was produced in court, but nothing could be heard! Amplifiers were brought in at the next hearing and still there was no sound. I was later told that a police officer had taken away the original tape and replaced it with a blank one. (In this respect, the police of the NWFP are very different from that of the other provinces; they hold the politicians from their area in high regard).

During the breaks between hearings, the atmosphere was relaxed. Lawyers, witnesses, friends and policemen would stand outside the court entrance and drink green tea and eat boiled corncobs. I was outside during one of the breaks when a young relative of mine drove up on his motorbike. He was the bold sort, and would often come to see me despite the fact that he knew he would be under suspicion for doing so, being a government servant. He revved his motor bike and said, 'Brother, jump on to my motorbike and we will be in Afghanistan in no time!' I laughed and said: 'All this will be over soon.'

After I had been in jail for about a week, fans were installed in all the jail cells. The contractor was from Peshawar and a member of the Muslim League. While examining my cell, he left a note under my pillow. I took out the note after he left. It read: 'There are plans to move you from Peshawar jail to the D.I. Khan jail. On the way they plan to stop the vehicle and ask you to come out. When you are out of the vehicle they will create an incident and later allege that you tried to snatch a rifle from the guard and use it against them. Under no circumstances should you leave Peshawar.'

I paid heed to his advice, and told the superintendent that I would not leave the Peshawar jail under any circumstances.

In December 1976, I received information that elections would be announced in early January 1977, but that nine prominent politicians had been marked out, as those would not be allowed to win the elections under any circumstances. I also received news that massive rigging would take place, and some officers called master riggers had already been selected to oversee the process and ensure that the rigging went smoothly. When Air Marshal Asghar Khan came to see me in court and I told him what I had heard, he suggested that we boycott the elections. I disagreed, and told him that we should go ahead and contest the elections so that people would see for themselves that massive rigging had taken place, which would be the only way to launch a movement proper against Bhutto. Asghar Khan agreed with me. We were going to fight the elections with full vigour.

The National Assembly was dissolved in the first week of January 1977. Despite the transparency of Bhutto's designs to rig the elections, the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), comprised of nine political parties, announced the tickets given to various party members. Hoping to divide the family votes, the PPP nominated my cousin Akhtar Nawaz Khan, for both the national and provincial seats, whereas my elder brother Akhtar was standing for the provincial seat on a PNA ticket. I was to contest from Haripur, where Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan was the sitting member. Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan had contested the Haripur seat in 1970 and become the Interior Minister in 1972 in the Bhutto cabinet. Although his contact with the area was limited, I felt it would be difficult for me to unseat an Interior Minister from a death cell. However, Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan himself felt he should move to a safer seat, and so he chose to contest from Abbottabad.

I filed my nomination papers from the death cell. My wife took charge of my campaign and practically fought my election for me—in addition to fighting my court cases. Without her courage

and strength even the thought of contesting elections from jail would have been impossible. She was harassed by the PPP and the agencies who would roam the streets fully armed; she concealed rifles in her cars to meet any eventuality in self-defence. Every weekend she would come to Peshawar and then go back to Abbottabad and Haripur after discussing plans for the campaign.

Bhutto kept a tight lid on political activity during the campaign period. Abdul Wali Khan was undergoing trial in Hyderabad. Chaudhry Zahoor Elahi had been sentenced to jail. A large number of politicians had joined Bhutto, ascribing to the philosophy typical of politicians: 'if you can't beat them, join them.' Bhutto was feeling that he was at the peak of his power.

On election day people found that their votes had already been cast, while some ballot papers lay in ditches. The results were announced on radio and television as they came in from each constituency. The PPP was seen to be leading everywhere. From the opposition, it was only Air Marshal Asghar Khan and myself who had won our seats out of the nine earmarked for defeat. We had won despite the fact that the Military Secretary, Major General Mohammad Imtiaz Ali, and the Chief Secretary, NWFP, Mr Munir Hussain, had flown to Abbottabad the day before the elections to discuss with the commissioner ways to ensure our defeat.

When the results started coming in, Bhutto ordered that the results of Nara Amazai and Bait Gali Union Councils not be announced. (I had won in both Union Councils). My supporters surrounded the assistant commissioner's office in Haripur. My wife called up the Chief Election Commissioner asking why the results were not being announced. He said that I had won, and fell silent. She asked him the question again: why were the results not being announced? He would not reply. The results were announced only after my supporters threatened to burn down the office of the assistant commissioner and that of the election commission office in Haripur. Bhutto had instructed that I be

declared as defeated and then left to fight my case in courts for the next five years.

Throughout Pakistan people felt cheated by the obvious rigging of the elections. The PNA leadership announced the boycott of the subsequent Provincial Assembly elections. As promised, the polling stations were deserted on the day of those elections, and the PPP stuffed the boxes with votes at will. A farce of the highest order! Imagine the prime minister and all four chief ministers being elected unopposed in the National Assembly elections.

Hanging as a punishment had been put in abeyance when Bhutto came to power. As a result, the death cells in every jail were full. In April 1977, however,—shortly after the elections—Bhutto issued instructions to start the hangings. Between May and July 1977, there were fourteen hangings in Peshawar jail; I know this first-hand because the gallows were next to my cell. The evening before a hanging the whole jail would fall silent. The person to be hung was already like a corpse, especially when he would see his family for the last time.

After the elections, the PNA leadership met to announce an all-out movement against the PPP government. On 12 March 1977, while I was asleep—I had been given a bed of sorts chained to the door, the only luxury I got in jail as a 'B' class prisoner)—a Havaladar came to my cell and clanged on the metal bars to wake me up and asked me to follow him. I obeyed, imagining the worst as I followed him. My mother had not been in good health—anything could have happened!

I soon found myself in the superintendent's office, where a gentleman who I did not know was also present. The superintendent introduced him as Malik Mohammad Hayat Tamman, Bhutto's advisor. The man said to me: 'You and Bhutto have been good friends. What has happened is over; he wants your friendship. Come to the National Assembly to take oath. If you don't want to remain a member of the assembly, that's fine,



it is your choice. You may ask for any office—here, he is expecting a call from you.’ He handed me the telephone.

‘I have very little to talk about with Bhutto,’ I replied. ‘He has done everything to harm my family, there isn’t much more damage he can do. No, I will not talk to Bhutto nor will I take the oath.’ A moment later, I asked: ‘So how do you think the movement against Bhutto will pan out?’

‘We will crush it in three days,’ he replied.

‘I do not agree with you. Movements based on religion and economic distress always succeed. A movement will have its ups and downs but it will succeed.’

The man left disappointed. I went back to my cell.

The PNA movement took off like a spark in a haystack, and the PPP could not counter it. When top leaders were arrested, the second tier of the leadership replaced them; it was impossible to crush the movement. The jails were again stuffed with political prisoners. No less than 100,000 people were put behind bars, and over 100 killed.

About 250 political activists were arrested from areas around Mardan and Malakand and brought to the Peshawar jail. They were to be shifted to Haripur jail after five days. When the relatives of these detainees found out where they were, they came to see them and give them clothes, money, and arrange for legal aid. Asfandiyar Wali Khan and Nisar Khan Preech Khel were among the detainees, having been sentenced for the bomb blast case in which Hayat Khan Sherpao was killed. These two gentlemen tried to persuade the jail authorities not to shift the detainees to Haripur; if more detainees were brought in, they argued, those were the ones who should be sent to Haripur. The jail authorities and provincial administration refused the plea. However, when they tried to take the detainees to Haripur, they refused to go. Asfandiyar Wali Khan came to my cell, broke down the door and asked me to come and join the others. By this time the whole jail was in revolt and the Frontier Constabulary surrounded the jail.

Asfandiyar Wali Khan, Nisar Khan, Abdul Khaliq Khan (MNA) and I were summoned to the superintendent's office. The Inspector General of Prisons was sitting in the superintendent's chair, a cane in his hand. He made us sit in front of him and told us that we were trouble makers and he would not tolerate such nonsense from us. No sooner had he finished speaking than Abdul Khaliq Khan snatched the cane from the IG's hand and started thrashing him. The superintendent watched all this without intervening. Never had an IGP been beaten up inside the jail! The four of us finally left the office and trooped back to a barrack where the prisoners were waiting for us.

A meeting of the prominent people in jail was held to consider future action. I pointed out that we had kerosene and blankets in the jail, and the roofs were old timber; we could set the place on fire. Or we could storm the jail towers and take them over. We would probably lose seven men in this endeavour, I estimated. And if the jail was on fire, the guards might evacuate the towers.

The jail authorities were, of course, informed of our plan. As a result, the detainees were not shifted to Haripur and they relaxed their control. I was now free to move around the jail; in fact, we even started playing volleyball in the evenings. Life in jail became far more tolerable, even cheerful. All sorts of fruits, vegetables, and food were brought in by relatives, friends and supporters of the detainees. We would watch the news avidly. Every time Mark Tully (a BBC correspondent) came on air, it would send a cheer through the audience, particularly when he gave details of the PNA demonstrations. We nicknamed Mark Tully '*Mar Talli*' (ring the bell).

Some time later, the jail superintendent was transferred and Lt.-Col. (retd) Abid Hussain Gilani replaced him. He and I had served together in East Pakistan and he was from the Sher-Dils. He would visit me every evening and we would have tea under a tree in the courtyard in front of the death cells.

The police, the paramilitary forces, and even the army deployed in Karachi were under pressure from the public and the opposition parties to get rid of Bhutto. The Joint Chief of Staff and Service Chiefs were called by Bhutto to a cabinet meeting, mainly to convince his cabinet that the top leadership of the armed forces was with him. At the meeting, the Chiefs gave a statement supporting Bhutto. (After Bhutto's removal, they denied ever having given the statement).

Negotiations with the PNA leadership continued. The movement was reaching its climax. The PPP ministers were constantly paranoid, changing houses and not sleeping in the same location for more than two nights in a row. Bhutto went to Saddar Bazaar in Rawalpindi and tried to give a speech stating that the elephants—meaning the American government—were after him because he had initiated Pakistan's nuclear programme. The gimmick didn't work.

On 4 July—America's Independence Day—most government officials had gone to attend the reception at the US Embassy that day. The Chief Minister of the NWFP sent word to the chairman of the special court to conclude my cases and convict me. The chairman obeyed, openly stating in court that he would announce the verdict tomorrow. 'We'll see what happens tomorrow,' I told the prosecution and the chairman. The chairman asked if I was trying to threaten him. I said I was not. No doubt, he must have made up his mind then to give me the maximum possible punishment.

At 6:15 a.m. the next morning, Lieutenant Colonel (retd) Aleem Afridi came to my cell and beat on the iron grill to wake me up. He said that he had heard on the radio that the meetings between the PNA and Bhutto were continuing, and suddenly at the end there had been an announcement that the prime minister had been taken into custody. The army had taken over but it was not clear who was heading them. I asked him if there had been

any exchange of fire. He said there hadn't been. I knew for sure then that General Ziaul Haq had taken over. If there had been shooting, it would have indicated that there had been a takeover attempt by junior officers.

That morning I was taken to the special court for my trial. When I entered the court, the presiding judge and the other two members were all smiling. They asked me if I would like tea, *samosas* or if I preferred cake. I thanked them as I had just had breakfast, and asked them to carry on with the trial.

'What trial?' they asked.

'The one you were keen to conclude today and sentence me.'

'Oh, forget that!' they exclaimed. They told me about General Ziaul Haq's takeover and Bhutto's detention. I was taken back to the jail. There too the staff was falling over each other to be nice to me. A tray containing tea, fruit and cake was sent to me from the superintendent.

I should have been released the same day, but it still took a further two weeks to secure my release on bail.

\* \* \* \*

General Zia announced that fresh elections would take place in ninety days and named his plan 'Operation Fair Play'. I called it Operation 'Foul Play' because General Zia declared that even if he had 100 per cent evidence against Bhutto, he would still not press charges against him. It seemed to us at the time that General Ziaul Haq had helped Bhutto by removing him from the confrontation with the opposition so that he could rebound and return to power again. General Zia probably changed his mind when he met Bhutto in Murree, where the deposed Prime Minister threatened the army chief. It is also reported that a leading politician from the NWFP told General Zia that there was one grave and two people. 'Choose who goes into the grave: you, General, or Bhutto?' The general certainly did not want to go into the grave. He chose Bhutto.

The elections were announced, and campaigning began in a lacklustre fashion. Soon there was talk of postponing the elections and, predictably enough, they were postponed. Next, Bhutto was arrested and elections cancelled. At that point, I left the Tehrik-i-Istiqlal and Asghar Khan, since he was bent on breaking the PNA—he had been given assurances from General Zia that he would be made the prime minister. The PNA was flooded with new members at the time, due to the belief that all other parties would boycott the elections and they would hence have a walk-over. However, Air Marshal Asghar Khan decided to speak out against General Ziaul Haq (when he realized he was not going to be made prime minister) and was put under house arrest for nearly four years.

When martial law was declared on 5 July 1977, Bhutto and the PNA leaders were detained. When they were released, the military government was alarmed at Bhutto's popularity. He was received by large crowds at all the railway stations *en route* to Lahore. This was not lost on most of the PNA leaders and they were certainly not prepared to fight a general election knowing they would be defeated despite the fact that it would be held under martial law. Bhutto was arrested again and the PNA thought this would give them a boost. However, the second election date was also cancelled despite the fact that nomination papers had been filed and scrutinised. Politicians, particularly those belonging to the PNA, then began trying to get into the cabinet. Some of them were inducted. A Majlis-e-Shoora—an unelected body—was created to serve in place of the National Assembly.

It soon became evident that we were in for a long, hard period of martial law.

# 18

## THE ERA OF GENERAL ZIAUL HAQ

THE YEARS OF General Ziaul Haq saw the rise of what came to be known as the 'heroin and Kalashnikov culture'. Weapons were being provided to various Mujahidden leaders by the ISI for fighting in Afghanistan. The Mujahideen leaders were selling brand new Kalashnikov rifles in markets in the Pakistani tribal areas. Bullets cost a rupee each and if bought in bulk, they were sold by weight. Officials were arrested on charges of drug-smuggling; even aircraft belonging to the air force were searched for drugs. The Governor of the NWFP, Lieutenant General Fazal-e-Haq, somehow developed a reputation as a close ally of heroin smugglers. I made public statements against the drug lords during my election campaign, calling the Governor a 'heroin king', who asked the Commissioner of Hazara to threaten me with imprisonment in the D.I. Khan jail in response.

In Father's time, Lieutenant General Fazal-e-Haq wanted to become the military secretary to the President, a position which required the officer to be a Major General. Father denied him the post, and Fazal-e-Haq never forgot it. Hence, when he became Governor he was eager to demonstrate his new-found authority, and personally saw as to which persons were elected as MNAs and MPAs (Members of the National Assembly and Provincial Assembly) and senators. In response, I sent a telegram to the Chief Election Commissioner asking that the purportedly 'unopposed' elections of the NWFP senators be declared void as there had been gross and open abuse of authority by the Governor. All nineteen senators were brought in unopposed

from the NWFP by the Governor. This telegram was also sent to the Chief Election Commissioner and the Speaker of the National Assembly, who acknowledged receipt but to no effect.

After my release from jail at the end of July 1977, I met Major General Fazal-e-Haq in Peshawar. He was commanding the 7 Infantry Division, which was also responsible for Hazara. He told me to go and meet General Ziaul Haq so that the general could get to know me. 'General Ziaul Haq is not very bright,' he added. 'If you have to make a point, say it slowly and never repeat less than three times.' As evident from his comment, Fazal-e-Haq's attitude towards General Ziaul Haq was quite cavalier. When he was in Ziaul Haq's presence, he would behave as though they were both still in the Guides Cavalry regiment, with Captain Fazal-e-Haq as the Adjutant and Captain Ziaul Haq the Quartermaster.

When Ziaul Haq's government started inducting civilian political personalities into the Cabinet, Fazal-e-Haq nominated Raja Sikander Zaman to be the federal minister from Haripur. Sikander Zaman had been part of the Qayyum League and a provincial minister in Bhutto's time. He joined the PPP and contested the provincial elections from Haripur (which were cancelled) on a PPP ticket. He was clearly being groomed to defeat me in a future election.

\* \* \* \*

Bombs were going off in the NWFP in the latter half of the 1970s, in which the Afghan government and the National Awami Party were instrumental. (When I was in Peshawar jail, there were 104 activists of the NAP who had been arrested on charges of sabotage, blowing up bridges, electric pylons, etc. All of them would openly admit to their actions when I would ask them). To counter these frequent blasts, Major General Naseerullah Khan Babar (who was the Inspector General of the Frontier Corps at the time) won the support of Gulbadin Hikmatyar, an Afghan

warlord and influential leader, and aided him in carrying out acts of sabotage in Afghanistan. (Utilizing these relationships, the NWFP police and paramilitary forces bought armoured personnel carriers from Afghan warlords for as little as Rs300,000 each—which included the guns). This saved them the time to import them and the cost was next to nothing. Slowly other Afghans were also taken on board by Naseerullah Babar.

\* \* \* \*

During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan from December 1979 to January 1989, a number of Soviet and Afghan planes were either shot down or forced down when they entered Pakistani airspace. Sometimes their fighters would deliberately enter Pakistan, flying in at full speed to test the reaction-time of our radars and command-and-control system. On one such mission, a Russian test pilot, Colonel Rustkoy, flew his SU-22 into Pakistan. No sooner had he done so, two of our F-16s intercepted him, and one of them locked onto Colonel Rustkoy's fighter and launched a missile attack on his plane. Colonel Rustkoy ejected before his plane exploded and he was captured, interrogated and sent back to Russia three days later. As it turned out, Colonel Rustkoy quit the air force and ended up becoming the Vice President of the Soviet Union! Some years later, when he was no more the Vice President, he came to Pakistan searching for Soviet soldiers who had been captured by the Mujahideen or settled down in Afghanistan. However, due to the heavy snowfall, the mountain passes were closed, so the Soviet soldiers could not come to Islamabad to be taken back by Rustkoy.

The Mujahideen dreaded the MI-25 Russian helicopter gunship because it had tremendous fire power, speed, and armoured protection on its underbelly, making it fairly resistant to small firearms. To overcome this disadvantage, the Mujahideen mounted machine guns high up on the mountain sides to shoot at the helicopters from above, when they would fly low in the



valleys searching for their targets. The introduction of the stinger and blowpipe shoulder-fired ground-to-air missiles nearly cleared the air and inflicted heavy casualties on low-flying fighters and helicopters.

The dreaded Soviet Army did not prove to be anywhere as fearsome as the West had built them up to be. They had a force of approximately over 125,000 soldiers in Afghanistan, of whom 12,000 died and many more were wounded. When the Soviet soldiers travelled in their armoured personnel carriers, they used their steel helmets as urinals and would use the back door of their armoured vehicles to throw out the contents, so scared were they of being shot at.

\* \* \* \*

A referendum was held by General Ziaul Haq on 19 December 1984. The local governments in the provinces and centre projected it as an occasion to celebrate and an opportunity for the people to make known their wishes. The reality was that all polling stations, in the cities and in the towns, were empty. Turnout in the rural areas was also low. However, by evening, the ballot boxes had been stuffed and the election commission announced a 64 per cent turnout and President General Ziaul Haq was made President for five more years. The referendum was clearly questionable, and no country congratulated him on his victory. But naturally, Ziaul Haq's ministers and his cronies flooded his house to congratulate him.

General elections were announced for March 1985. The opposition parties under the chairmanship of Air Marshal Asghar Khan, boycotted the non-party elections. General Ziaul Haq understood the opposition's game and knew how to keep the old politicians and the PPP out of the picture. The opposition remained outside the political mainstream for over three years after that.

For me, this election was very difficult. I was up against the Minister for Water and Power, Raja Sikandar Zaman, in Haripur. The Haripur district was home to the Tarbela and Khanpur dams, and the people who had been displaced due to these projects would appeal to the Ministry of Water and Power for compensation and for the lands promised to them in Sindh and Punjab. The ministry was also going to provide electricity to various villages in the area. Compared to Raja Sikandar Zaman, I had virtually nothing to offer my constituency in material terms.

I went to General K.M. Arif (then Vice Chief of the Army Staff) in the GHQ, and told him that sitting ministers should first step down and then run for elections. Otherwise, Sikandar Zaman, being a minister under the current administration, would be guaranteed a slot in the cabinet without the need to engage in the political process. Besides, I would not be able to say in my campaigns that I was close to the President, for people would know it was not true. On the contrary, for my own political survival I would have to say things which could possibly create a rift between myself and the President. General K.M. Arif did not care to understand these issues. Perhaps he thought it expedient to be submissive rather than be an independent thinker. I left the general's office with the firm belief that I should target not just the minister Sikandar Zaman, but also the policies of the Governor of the NWFP, Lieutenant General Fazal-e-Haq, and those of President Ziaul Haq. This decision served me well.

The election campaign began. The Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Abbottabad called both Raja Sikandar Zaman and me to the Telephone Industries Club in Haripur to impress upon us that there should be no violence or display of arms during our campaign. We were both to give him details about when and where we would hold our public gatherings. Raja Sikandar Zaman said he had no idea where his gatherings would be held and could not provide that information until the day of the event

itself. I, on the other hand, told the DC that I had already arranged all of my public meetings and would provide him all the details shortly, except for the last two days.

It was a sharp and bitter election campaign. I accused Raja Sikandar Zaman—who was being supported personally by Ziaul Haq—of incompetence and corruption. (One day, to the delight of the audience of one of my public meetings, I asked the General to participate openly in the Raja Sikandar Zaman campaign). The President would often say in his speeches that the loss of part of Siachen was of little consequence as no grass grows there. I used this saying to great benefit in my campaign, lamenting the fact that we had come to such a stage that we were fighting for grass instead of for the country. I was told that this really upset the President.

I did not spare Lt.-Gen. Fazal-e-Haq either. So while they fumed, the people clapped and the tide turned. The people voted for me under difficult conditions for which I will forever remain grateful to them. I received a telephone call from President Ziaul Haq to congratulate me on my victory. I thanked him for the gesture.

\* \* \* \*

After the elections, the Governor invited all the MNAs from the NWFP to the Governor House where the President was to address us. The President gave us a pep talk about our victory in the elections and how we should use our positions to serve the people. I wanted to object to the presence of the divisional commissioners in the meeting, as they had not contributed to the election process or the campaigns, and it seemed to me that they had no business being there. But I let it go; after all, it was the first day of proceedings for the new administration.

When the subject of who would be nominated for prime minister came up, General Ziaul Haq said that he thought it would be desirable that the next prime minister be from Sindh.



General Ayub Khan being received at GHQ on 17 January 1951 after being appointed the first Muslim Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army



Lieutenant-General M. Musa inspecting an Afghan guard of honour on the Torkham border



Field Marshal Ayub Khan meeting the officers of the Sher Dils, Westridge, Rawalpindi. General M. Musa on extreme left. Capt. Asif Nawaz on extreme right. To my right Capt. S K Tressler and Capt. Lodhi.



Cadet Sergeant at Sandhurst, January 1956



ADC to the Commander-in-Chief, 1958



C-in-C General Ayub Khan, meeting officers of the Sher Dils, Kurmitola Cantt., near Dhaka. To my right Lieutenant Ghulam Saffar Khalil, Lieutenant Alam Jan Masood, Capt. Lodhi, Capt. M. Aslam



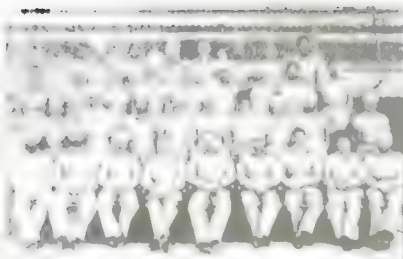
With Father and elder brother Akhtar Ayub, Augu 1957.



Parachute training in Fort Benning, USA and 250 foot high tower used for practice jumps before jumping from an aircraft July 1960



On the Kahuta road during training From left 2/Lieutenant Mosharraf Hussain ASC on attachment for training, Quartermaster Capt Asif Nawaz, Self (Adjutant), Major Nazar Mohammad Niazi, and 2/Lieutenant Hameed Ullah Khan Niazi.



Lt Col Ayub Khan re-raised the 'Sher Dils' on 16 May 1946 at Mir Ali, Waziristan. Subedar Major Iqbal Khan to his right and Subedar Mohammad Aslam to his left. All officers and veteran commissioned officers are present. Also in the photograph (second from left, front row) Second in Command Major G.S. Brar and Adjutant Captain A.F.I. Lambden (extreme left, third row).



General Ayub Khan at the wheel, Field Marshal Hardinge (British Army) in front, Lt Gen. Mac Auliffe (US Army), Maj Gen. Habibullah Khan sitting in the rear during training exercise of the Pakistan Army.



With Lieutenant Jamshed Burki (left), and elder brother Akhtar Ayub (right) in Thal during a 7 Punjab function.





During a break in training at Fort Benning, USA, March 1962



Field Marshal Ayub Khan addressing the nation upon the outbreak of war with India on 6 September 1965.



Indian Centurion tank captured during the 1965 war, now placed at Hanpur



Indian Gnat fighter flown by Sqn Leader B. S. Sikand was forced down by Flt Lt Hakimullah, flying a F 104. It surrendered at Pauri air base. Sqn. Leader Saad Hatmi flew the Gnat out of Pauri to be used later and flown for training as an enemy fighter.



Indian 25 pounder guns captured in the Chhamb sector, September 1965



Signing of the Tashkent agreement. From left to right: Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Aziz Ahmad (standing), Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan, and Mr Shahabuddin. Air Marshal Asghar Khan is seated at the back (third from right).



Ayub Khan riding a Yak whilst on a tour of Hunza, October 1962



Ayub Khan presented a horse 'Sardar' to President Kennedy which was painted by Mrs Jacqueline Kennedy on which she wrote 'for President Ayub from his friend Jacqueline Kennedy'.



The rear of one of the many trucks with Field Marshal Ayub Khan's picture painted on them.



Villagers collecting unburnt propellant after firing of 106 mm anti-tank recoilless rifles at Tilla ranges, June 1959.



Riding a Yak en route to the Khunjerab Pass to look for Marco Polo sheep, 18 October 1967.



Riding an elephant in the Royal Chitwan National Park, Tarai region of Nepal, to look for a tiger, 20 December 1968



With Premier Zhou En-Lai and Vice Premier Chen Yi. 6 August 1966 in Peking



With Prime Minister Zhou En-Lai and Zeb in the Great Hall of the People, Peking. 14 May 1967.

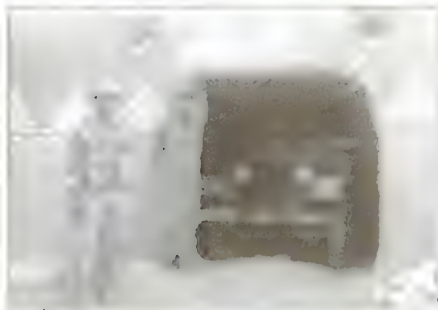


Seeing off Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Begum Nusrat Bhutto after dinner at my Karachi residence, January 1964.

In Indian territory with Cobra anti-tank missiles attached to 7 Punjab in which I served, December 1971.



An Indian bunker captured from 3 Assam Regiment by 7 Punjab, December 1971.



7 Punjab troops in Indian village, Poonch, December 1971





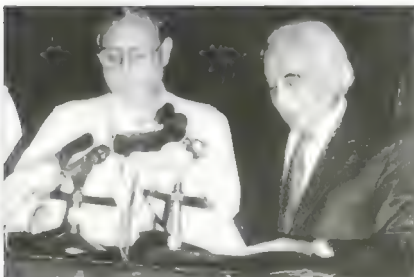
Behind the bars of the death cell, Peshawar Jail. This photograph was used for an election poster in 1977.



Entrance to the death cell in which I was held.

With Malik Qasim, Pir Pagaro and Chaudhry Zahoor Elahi in Haripur, March 1978.





Being sworn in as the Speaker by the outgoing Speaker Malik Mera Khan, 4 November 1990



With President Ghulam Ishaq Khan in the Speaker's Chamber



With Begum Nusrat Bhutto (MNA) and Begum Nasim Wali Khan (MPA) in a conference room of the European Parliament



An elephant tusk presented by me (second from left) to the Armoured Corps Centre President General Ziaul Haq in centre. Incidentally, all other officers are from 14 PMA. From left Brig. M. Afzal, Lt-Col. (retd) Nasir Abbas (Chief of Protocol), and Maj-Gen. Shamun Alam.



Dinner hosted as Speaker Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto (Leader of the Opposition) sitting on either side, November 1990.



Presiding over the National Assembly



Speaker of the Iranian Parliament  
Mehdi Karubi on a visit to  
Pakistan, January 1991.

With Begum Nusrat Bhutto (MNA) on a Parliamentary  
delegation in Australia, December 1990.



National Assembly delegation meeting Turkish President Turgut Ozal,  
January 1991.



With the Speaker of the Canadian Parliament, John Fraser, at a dinner in Ottawa.



Meeting Patricio Aylwin Azocar, President of Chile, in Santiago.



With the President of Hungary, Arpad Goncz. In the centre Malik Allah Yar (MNA).



With North Korean President Kim Il Sung

With President Rafsanjani of Iran and President Ghulam Ishaq Khan in the National Assembly



Laying the foundation stone of Parliament Lodge.  
19 December 1991.

## A "beauty" for a beautiful Lady or a Mercedes for a Prime Minister



Pictured in the port of Hamburg this white Mercedes-Benz S600L is awaiting shipment on Hual Traveller to Karachi, Pakistan.



This beautiful car has been bought by Mrs. Mohi-ud-Din, Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Mercedes-Benz S600L imported duty free by Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Published Volume 10 Issue 1/94, Hual International News. The International House Magazine of Hoegh-Ugland Auto Liners A/S, Germany.



With the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Mr Shiv Raj Patel, New Delhi, April 1993.



Meeting Leader of the Opposition Benazir Bhutto at her residence to pave the way for her to meet Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, 30 December 1991.



Meeting the Prime Minister of Hungary, József Antall, January 1993.



With General Asif Nawaz and US Ambassador Nicholas Platt.



Meeting First Lady Hillary Clinton in the US Embassy, Islamabad.





After a breakfast meeting with Indian External Minister I.K. Gujral, New Delhi, April 1997



With Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, HRH Crown Prince (now King) Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud [holding glass] of Saudi Arabia, and the President of Iran, Hashemi Rafsanjani.



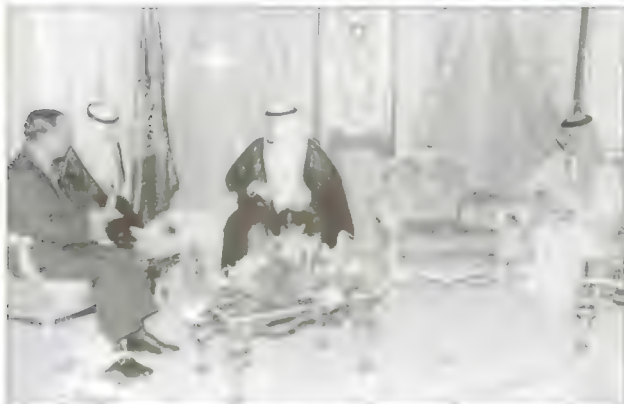
With the President of Turkmenistan, Saparmurad Niyazov



Joint Press Conference with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in Washington.



Receiving HM Queen Elizabeth and HRH Prince Philip.



With HM King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud and Foreign Minister HRH Prince Saud bin Faisal bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud



With Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen in Beijing.



With Turkish President Suleyman Demirel in Peshawar



With the designated President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, and Foreign Minister Alfred R. Nzo



Addressing Pakistani UN troops in Haiti, 28 September 1997



With Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov in Moscow, 8 July 1997.



With UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, May 1997



Meeting President Clinton in New York, September 1997 Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif (right) and Anwar Zahid (left) can also be seen in the photograph



Meeting Prime Minister Mahatir Mohammad of Malaysia.



With HRH Prince Charles in Colombo,  
Sri Lanka



Receiving President Ramos of  
the Philippines



Meeting President's Council  
 Representatives in London. From  
 Minister of National Education  
 Kadırganlı looks on



With the Foreign Minister  
 of Kuwait - Sheikh Sabah Al  
 Ahmad Al Sabah

With HRH Prince Saud  
 bin Faisal bin Abdul Aziz  
 Al Saud, Foreign Minister of  
 Saudi Arabia







With the Foreign Minister of Iran, Dr Kamal Kharrazi.



Receiving Foreign Minister Alexander Downer of Australia.



2000 1999, 2000 1999 2000 1999  
 bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown  
 Prince and Deputy Supreme  
 Commander of UAE Armed  
 Forces

Meeting Pope John Paul  
 in the Vatican along with  
 Prime Minister Nawaz  
 Sharif, 1998



Receiving the King of Nepal,  
 Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev.



During a retreat outside Colombo with SAARC Foreign Ministers.



Discussion with the Foreign Minister of Malaysia, Abdullah Ahmed Badawi.



With the Prime Minister of Thailand, Mr Chuan Leekpai.



With HH Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the late President of UAE.

Meeting the Foreign Minister of  
Kazakhstan, Qasymzhomart Toqayev.



Nawaz Sharif, Leader of the Opposition and  
self as Deputy Leader of the Opposition  
leading a motor procession, 1995.

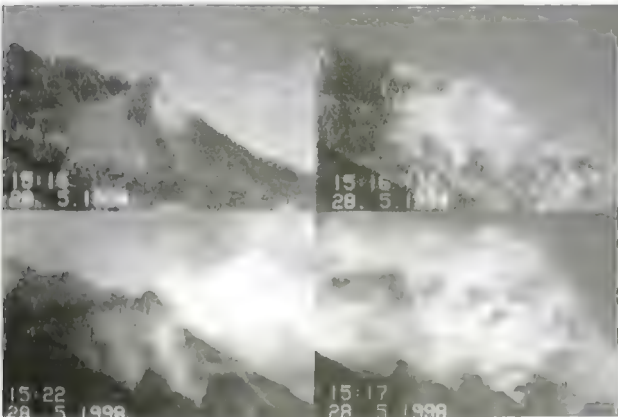


With Begum Nusrat Bhutto,  
Benazir Bhutto (Leader of  
the Opposition) and Zeb.





Meeting of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet regarding the decision to conduct six nuclear tests. From left Admiral Bokhari, self, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Anwar Zahid, Saeed Mehdi, Shamshad Ahmad, Air Marshal Metali, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain (hidden by Raja Zafar-ul-Haq), Raja Zafar-ul-Haq, Sartaj Aziz, General Karamat, Lieutenant General Zulfiqar Ali Khan, 15 May 1998



Nuclear test, Chagai, Balochistan, 28 May 1998.



Addressing a public gathering, Haripur, 1978.

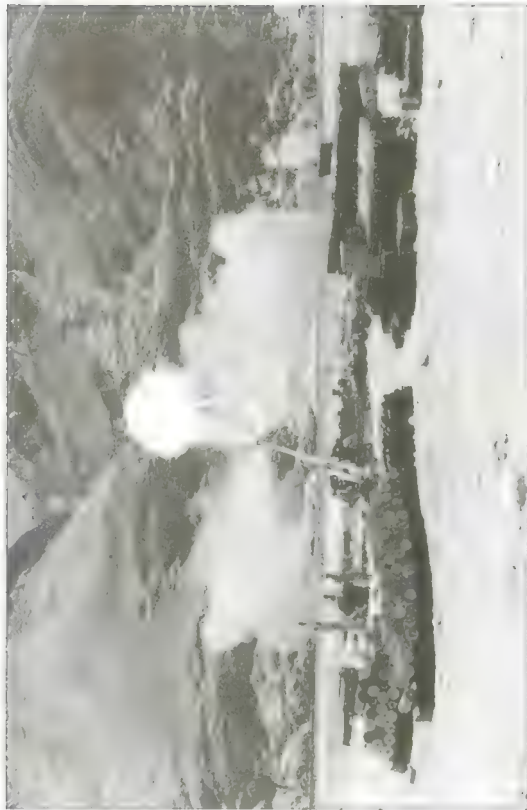


A Jawan manning a heavy machine gun during the Kargil conflict, May 1999.



The remains of a downed Indian jet fighter recovered during the Kargil conflict, 28 May 1999





130 mm gun firing during the Kargil conflict, June 1999.



With Father and elder brother Akhtar Ayub before leaving for Peshawar on my wedding day, 4 December 1959.



With elder brother Akhtar Ayub and Mother, 1958.



Mother and Father.



My mother and Zeb on the site of Arwan-e-Sadar which was being levelled. Father commented that building it should have a low priority, December 1967



Family photograph Front row (l-r) Tahir, Fakhr, Naseem, Grandmother, Father, Ishtai (squatting), Mother, Adnan, Jameela, Mrs Akhtar Ayub with Tahmina on her lap. Rear row (l-r) Shakila, Akhtar Ayub, self, and Zeb, March 1961



Father's last photograph with my family on Eid just a few days before he passed away on 20 April 1974. Sitting (l-r) Tariq, Mether and Omar. Standing: Zenab and Shireen.



Picnicking at Kuza Gah, near Ayubia. Children (l r) Zenab, Omar, Shireen, Meher and Tariq, June 1974



With my mother.



Zeb and Sell

Miangul Aurangzeb (my brother-in-law) got up and said, 'I object to this thinking and this decision. Will each province have to have a hanging to get PMs?' General Ziaul Haq was visibly annoyed. His face turned red, and he asked Miangul Aurangzeb to sit down. They both were from Guides Cavalry so Aurangzeb could take liberties.

The President went on to suggest two names: Soomro was one, and Junejo the other. Though his final choice was Junejo, the name of Mr Illahi Bakhsh Soomro continued to circulate in the corridors of power for some time.

\* \* \* \*

The night before the swearing-in ceremony of the newly elected members, the President requested Mr Soomro not to appear in front of the press as he was going to announce his nomination as the Prime Minister the next day. The President wanted it to be a secret so that other aspirants would not put pressure on him. Soomro agreed to the plan. He appeared the next morning in the State Bank building which was being used as the National Assembly. The galleries were jam-packed, and the elected members were all milling around Mr Soomro. Mr Mohammad Khan Junejo was standing near the podium, in the company of only Islam-ud-din Sheikh (MNA elect).

Junejo and I were good friends. I went over to him and we exchanged greetings. 'What is happening, Gohar Sahib?' he asked.

'Sain, you can see what's going on: Soomro is to be nominated as Prime Minister.'

'Can anything be done?' asked Junejo. By this time his companion, Islam-ud-Din Sheikh, had also left us to join the crowd around Soomro.

'It is never too late, we can still try. After the oath-taking ceremony, do not hang around—we will go and do something, late as it may be,' I assured him.



After the oaths, Mr Junejo and I left. I suggested we pay a visit to Pir Pagaro, president of the Muslim League, and he agreed. Pir Pagaro requested that if a Sindhi was to become the prime minister, then it must be his nominee. When we told him what was about to transpire, the Pir took immediate action and sent a message to General Ziaul Haq. Aware that Pir Pagaro had a large following in Sindh and was also the president of the PML, the President decided to make the change. All those who had clung to Soomro earlier were now zealously contragulating Junejo and trying hard to get into his good books.

Next up was the election of the Speaker of the National Assembly. General Ziaul Haq nominated Khawaja Mohammad Safdar, the Speaker of the Majlis-e-Shoora. The younger members of the assembly nominated Syed Fakhr Imam for the post, not wanting the assembly to continue functioning along the lines of the Majlis-e-Shoora. Mr Junejo called me up late one night to complain that we were not helping with the nomination of Khawaja Mohammad Safdar. I told him I had not been informed about the matter, but that I would begin working on the campaign.

Subsequently, two or three of us went to Khawaja Mohammad Safdar and took him around to ask the MNAs for votes. It quickly became evident that he hardly knew the members. By the afternoon on the day of the polls, Khawaja Mohammad Safdar's position was weak. Syed Fakhr Imam's group of young MNAs and Khawaja Mohammad Safdar's group bumped into each other in the Frontier House. I took Syed Fakhr Imam aside and told him, 'Fakhr, you will win this evening but you will not remain Speaker for long. The establishment will not forget.' I knew that Syed Fakhr Imam's goose would be cooked sooner than later.

That evening I was in the National Assembly building when Junejo entered the lobby. I took him aside to inform him of Khawaja Mohammad Safdar's impending defeat, which could have an adverse effect on his political image. Mr Junejo went pale and asked what could be done. I was of the opinion that the only

option was that the President request Syed Fakhr Imam to withdraw. Junejo was reluctant to speak to the President on the issue. It was then agreed that the Chief Election Commissioner, Justice S.A. Nusrat, would ask Colonel Ghafoor Khan Hoti to speak to the President, as the two were close. However, after calling the President, both Justice Nusrat and Colonel Hoti got cold feet and passed the phone to me. I explained the situation to the President and suggested that he ask Syed Fakhr Imam to withdraw. While all this was happening, the hour designated for the voting to commence had passed, and the election was delayed by nearly an hour. The members became restless and guessed that something was going on. And of course, when General Ziaul Haq asked Syed Fakhr Imam to withdraw, the age-old custom of switching loyalties commenced.

However, despite the President's announcement, Syed Fakhr Imam refused to withdraw, saying that he had gone too far in his campaign and it would be humiliating for him to simply step down at this point. And so not only did he remain in the contest, he in fact won by twelve votes—and that too despite the significant numbers who had switched their support over to Khawaja Mohammad Safdar at the very last moment.

\* \* \* \*

The result of the general election saw the main political pillars of the President defeated—his ministers and his speaker—and all this in spite of the fact that he had a five-year term under his belt. His ministers had been defeated in a non-party election even though the opposition had boycotted the elections. Now the defeat of Khawaja Mohammad Safdar, a handpicked politician, was a clear indication that General Zia's policies had been rejected. The National Assembly could now assert itself and the election of the Prime Minister would not be a pushover.

But Khawaja Mohammad Safdar's defeat was not taken lightly by Mr Junejo. Rather than make direct contact with the MNAs,

Mr Junejo called in the provincial governors to do the whipping on his behalf. In Junejo's first speech after becoming Prime Minister, he announced that martial law and democracy couldn't go together; an obvious signal of the tussle that lay ahead.

A privilege motion was moved by four MNAs in mid-April 1985. This motion stated that although the elections had been initiated under the 1973 Constitution, half way through—under a RCO (Revival of Constitution Order)—major changes were brought about which affected the members of the National Assembly during the campaign. Also, the President had called the MNAs horses and donkeys—(this was reported in the press)—and a privilege motion was moved against the President. There was a heated debate on the issue and the Speaker, Syed Fakhr Imam, accepted the privilege motion. Members of the House Committee began pressing General Ziaul Haq to present himself before them.

When the motion was taken up in the National Assembly, not one member rose to defend the President. The motion was accepted and referred to the Privileges Committee. That evening there was a dinner in the Army House. Towards the end of the event, the President asked about the proceedings in the Assembly with regards to the motion. The ministers and MNAs sitting with him at the table blamed the Speaker for accepting the privilege motion and prolonging speeches which attacked the President. I spoke up then and said that it could not be the Speaker's fault alone, since no one, myself included, had gotten up to defend the President. Everyone lowered their gaze and the room fell silent. Speaker Syed Fakhr Imam was not going to be spared. This was definite.

A delegation of the National Assembly went to South America, with Syed Fakhr Imam as their leader. His wife, Syeda Abida Hussain, was also part of the delegation. On their return, a lady MNA went to the Prime Minister and reported the strong language that Syeda Abida Hussain had used against him. (Abida Hussain was Leader of the Opposition at the time). In another

meeting at the Army House, Fakhr Imam was widely criticized. The President too wanted Syed Fakhr Imam removed, and the ministers now felt it necessary to get rid of him and 'kill two birds with one stone', as they put it. Confident that the Speaker would be removed, the ministers also asked for the dismissal of the Speaker of the Sindh Assembly, Mr Hussain Haroon. A go-ahead was given for removal of both.

On 26 May 1986, Syed Fakhr Imam was removed from his position as Speaker of the National Assembly. The new Speaker was to be from the Punjab. The Prime Minister called all the MNAs and asked them for their recommendations. Many members recommended Mr Hamid Nasir Chattha, who was subsequently voted in on 31 May 1986. Mr Hussain Haroon was replaced by Syed Muzaffar Hussain Shah as Speaker of the Sindh Assembly.

\* \* \* \*

After the manner in which Mr Junejo came to power, in which he was heavily dependent on the Governors' support, he was left with little choice but to accept their recommendations for the appointment of ministers. Thus, Lieutenant General Sahibzada Yaqub Khan was made foreign minister and Dr Mahbub ul Haq the finance minister. Both had been ministers in the previous government as well.

I left for Abbottabad, knowing how the system works, and that my stand during the elections would not make me a favourite for any appointment. Though I was on good terms with Mr Junejo and knew that he would surely nominate me for ministership, I also knew that the recommendation would be shot down by the NWFP Governor and, of course, by the President.

Mr Junejo soon realized that the House could not be run on a non-party basis. All the members had contested as independents and still were. The President and the governors were not in

favour of parties being revived in the House, but Junejo finally persuaded the President to let him try to revive the Muslim League.

The Prime Minister started his campaign from the NWFP. The NWFP Governor, Lieutenant General Fazal-e-Haq, gathered all the Senators, MNAs and MPAs in the Governor House, where Junejo elaborated his plan of reviving the Muslim League, stressing that it was the Quaid's party, the party which had created Pakistan. One of the senators rose and told Junejo flat-out that there was no need to revive the Muslim League; everything was running smoothly, he added, and the Governor and the Chief Minister were both doing a good job, so what was the problem? The revival of the League was rejected by the vast majority present at the meeting. The Prime Minister was at a loss about what to do.

At lunch after the meeting, Junejo asked me to sit at his table. I immediately heard the exasperation in his voice when he asked me how this situation had come to be. I told him that all the members were in tight control of the Governor, and only a handful supported the revival of the Muslim League (which included me). I told him to stop wasting his time in the NWFP and concentrate his efforts on the Punjab, and especially on Mian Nawaz Sharif, the Chief Minister, who was becoming slightly inclined towards the party. Nawaz Sharif could be the deciding factor, I told Junejo. And sure enough, Nawaz Sharif was the one who brought the non-party members over towards the Muslim League. Eventually the Muslim League ended up with a majority in the National Assembly and in the Senate!

\* \* \* \*

Raja Zafar-ul-Haq had been made the ambassador to Egypt after his defeat in the elections. He wanted to return to Pakistan and the President was considering appointing him Secretary General of the Muslim League. The Prime Minister called a meeting in

his office to discuss the matter. Everyone was praising the decision. When the Prime Minister asked me what I thought, I told him: 'Raja Sahib has been very loyal to my father. He is a very good friend of mine, has vast experience and knows practically most of the parliamentarians and party workers. He is good in public relationing and administration.'

The meeting was over right there. The Prime Minister rejected all our views. Iqbal Ahmad Khan was made Secretary General. We were at a loss as to where his name had cropped up from. There was no comparison between Raja Zafar-ul-Haq and Iqbal Ahmad Khan.

\* \* \* \*

General Ziaul Haq proposed amendments to the constitution in April 1985. Many of the proposals made by the President were not accepted in the Assembly, especially his desire to constitute a National Security Council. The MNAs met at the auditorium of the Prime Minister's office at Rawalpindi and President Ziaul Haq called the MNAs together at the Prime Minister's office and tried to convince them of the need for such a council. Still, the members would not yield. After a lengthy debate which lasted the entire day, the General announced that he simply did not need the National Assembly and threatened to dissolve it. Four days later, he again called a meeting on the issue, but the members' reply remained the same: 'No National Security Council.'

General Ziaul Haq continued to wear four hats: of President, of Joint Chief of Staff, of Chief of Army Staff and of Martial Law Administrator. Some also said he was the Chief Scout. It was evident that he did not want to be dependent on anyone to carry out his wishes; he preferred to reserve all seats of power for himself so as to ensure his control.

The Eighth Amendment was passed on 16 October 1985, which vested the President with the power to appoint the

Services Chiefs, the Chief Justice, and Justices of the provinces and the Governors, and also to dissolve the National Assembly. It was a Presidential form of government in the garb of a parliamentary system. Article 58(2)(b) was incorporated (which allowed the President to dissolve the National Assembly) to avoid a situation like the one that arose in March 1977, when people were protesting against Bhutto in the streets.

Martial law was lifted on 30 December 1985. Changes in the cabinet and in the posts of governor were in the works. The National Assembly settled down to its regular business with only seventeen members acting as the opposition. Mohammad Saifullah Khan, an experienced lawyer, was at the forefront of this group and constantly kept the pressure on the government—the government which was now composed of the newly revived Muslim League.

Prior to the Senate elections, Lieutenant General Fazal-e-Haq prepared a list of his cronies and of the individuals that he wanted to insert in the Senate, whose purpose would be to destabilize certain unwanted MNAs. These favoured individuals were asked to sign their nomination papers without even knowing the names of those who had proposed or seconded their nominations. The same abuse of authority took place in the nominations to the technocrats' seats of the Senate. I wrote to the election commission about this fraud but they took no notice.

\* \* \* \*

In mid-1983, President General Ziaul Haq had granted permission, through the CDA, to Fecto Cement (Ltd.) to establish a cement plant in Islamabad. The Islamabad master-plan did not permit the establishment of an industrial plant of that nature within the city confines, but the President overruled the CDA's objection, and the company began the construction of their plant. Four entire sectors of Islamabad had been given to the

company. In the National Assembly, I brought up the question of why the plant had been sanctioned. My question was bombarded with supplementary questions from various MNAs, all questioning the validity of the sanction. The Prime Minister constituted a committee (of which I was a member) to look into the matter. Three separate reports were submitted by the committee. I was the only one who voiced dissent against the President's decision and asserted that the should plant be shifted to a location outside the Islamabad capital territory. The CDA even took the matter to court to stop the construction of the cement plant. The case dragged on and on and probably has still not been concluded.

\* \* \* \*

The Finance Minister, Yaseen Khan Wattoo, presented the budget in the National Assembly on 29 May 1986. The ruling-party members did not like the provisions of the budget and demanded that it be prepared afresh by a new team. The Prime Minister appointed Mohammad Khakan Abbasi (Minister for Production) as the chairman of this committee, of which I too was a part. The revised budget was passed without difficulty. One particularly popular aspect of the revised budget—and perhaps this is what saved Junejo's government—was the proposal to replace the fancy cars used by officials with small Suzukis.

The next day I went to a bakery and amidst the conversation I asked the owner whether he liked the budget.

'It is excellent,' the man behind the counter replied.

'What is excellent about it?' I asked him.

'Well,' he said, 'Junejo has put the senior government and army officers in Suzukis! That's excellent!'

Everyone, including the Prime Minister and President, was forced to get smaller cars. This probably did not cut government expenditures any, but it was a hit with the public.



## The Siachen Conflict

The ceasefire line—as per the Karachi agreement—extended from the international border upto map grid point NJ-9842. As the area beyond this point was inaccessible, the Indian and Pakistani representatives agreed that from the point NJ-9842 the boundary would proceed 'thence north to the glaciers'. The whole Siachen dispute stems from the words 'thence north to the glaciers'. In 1984, Indian troops under the Commander of 15 Corps, Lieutenant General M.L. Chibber, moved into the Siachen glacier. Prior to this, neither India nor Pakistan had any permanent presence in the area though Pakistan and China had put boundary pillars in the Karakoram Pass, meaning the L.O.C was from NJ-9842 straight to the Karakoram Pass.

\* \* \* \*

On 4 June 1987, the Prime Minister took the four Chief Ministers, the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, and I to the Siachen glacier to take a look at the troops' positions and conditions under which they were defending the posts. In the local language '*sia*' is a single petalled red rose and '*chen*' is 'many'. We landed by helicopter at the base camp, where we were received by General Mirza Aslam Beg (the Vice Chief of Army Staff), the Commander of 10 Corps, and the Divisional Commander. The Divisional Commander gave us a briefing on the situation on the ground. The floor was then opened up for questions.

The Prime Minister remained silent. After asking his permission, I asked the Divisional Commander why we could not attack the Indians, get behind their positions, and reclaim the area lost on the glacier. At that, General Aslam Beg rose and said, 'If we try to get behind the Indians or oust them from Siachen, it will lead to war.' I asked him whether we would be cutting any main communication route or threatening any

important sector. We would only be taking back that which was ours. General Aslam Beg insisted that it would lead to war and that if anything was to be done, it would have to be a political decision. At that, I again asked the Prime Minister's permission to speak.

'General Beg,' I said. 'We are giving the wrong signal to the Indians at their headquarters in Srinagar and Delhi by this high profile visit. The Prime Minister, you, Corps Commander, and Divisional Commander are here along with the four Chief Ministers. There are two F-16 fighter aircrafts giving top cover to us. Do you think the Indians will miss all this? The Prime Minister is going up on a helicopter to see the Quaid Post which is the highest in the world. I strongly feel the Indians will conclude that the Prime Minister and the Vice Chief of Army Staff are here to give a pep talk to the troops for an attack, but you have no intention of taking back the Siachen glacier or even part of it. The Indians will attack you in the next fifteen to twenty days.'

'Impossible!' the three generals said.

'I feel they will,' I repeated.

The briefing concluded, and we were asked to move to the Mess for lunch. General Aslam Beg may have felt that he had given the Prime Minister a poor impression of himself, for he put his thumbs in his belt and said to the Prime Minister, 'Sir! If you order me to do so, I will retake Siachen.' To this, the Prime Minister replied, 'General Sahib, if I order you, you will put the blame on me if you fail. You do not have the conviction to undertake this venture.'

A few weeks later, I was attending a party meeting in the National Assembly cafeteria. I had been told the night before that the Quaid Post in Siachen had been attacked by the Indians. The Pakistani troops had fought gallantly but all of them were killed. I went up to the Prime Minister and informed him that the Quaid Post, which he had visited, had been attacked and occupied by the Indians. 'No, it is not possible!' he said in

disbelief. 'No one has told me about this! Ask Rana Naeem.' (Rana Naeem was the Minister of State for Defence.) Mr Naeem waived the matter off as an impossibility, and was convinced that if it had actually happened, he would at least have been informed. I went back to the Prime Minister and told him that the minister had no information. Rana Naeem left the party meeting to follow up on the news. Later the same night, he called me to confirm that the information I had was correct.

At a dinner party hosted by the PM a month later, the Prime Minister took me aside and said, 'Gohar sahib, kindly stay back afterwards; I want to have a word with you.' When the guests had left, and the Prime Minister and I were walking in his driveway, he asked me if we could retake the Quaid Post. Certainly, I told him, given that we gave the job to officers who have their heart in it. However, the cut-off date for any such operation would have to be 15 September, I warned him, as it would start snowing soon after that. The terrain would become almost impossible to navigate once the snowfall began.

Plans were made to retake the Quaid Post. (I had left for the USA by then). The imminent operation became the talk of the town and it is possible that the Indians received news of the plan. The attack was planned for after 15 September and—lo and behold!—it snowed that very day. All the routes that had been selected by our troops were covered with a thick blanket of snow. The plan should have been called off but orders were given to attack.

Our troops had great difficulty in moving up the glacier in waist-deep snow. Besides, the Indians were waiting for them, and our attack was beaten back. To this day, the Indian flag flies on the Quaid Post. Years later six posts were lost without a shot being fired due to sheer negligence of our troops. The Indians now command the high ground. Pakistani troop movement to the post etc. is overlooked by the Indians.

The bulk of the rations and ammunition was taken up to the posts by local porters. Army mules suffered from the cold and

fell sick. Amongst animal transport, the small donkey from the Punjab plains was found to be the most useful. These animals would move in the glacier with their load as if they were in the plains and would happily eat left-over *chappatis* given to them by the *jawans*.

\* \* \* \*

In the first week of February 1988, Prime Minister Junejo asked me to come see him. He disclosed that the Soviets would be leaving Afghanistan soon, and he wanted to discuss the issue with the opposition and wished to call a round table conference in Islamabad. Anticipating that the one person who could potentially foil the conference was Air Marshal Asghar Khan, he asked me to get a commitment from Asghar Khan to attend the conference before he announced it to members of the cabinet. I had earlier set up a meeting of the Prime Minister and the Air Marshal during my daughter's wedding in Abbottabad, where they briefly discussed the possibility of Asghar Khan aligning himself with the Muslim League. However, Asghar Khan had not contacted the Prime Minister after that discussion.

I contacted the Air Marshal in Karachi, where he was staying at his son's residence. I conveyed the Prime Minister's best wishes to him and told him that he was the first to be contacted with regards to the conference since the Prime Minister held him in such high esteem. The Air Marshal wanted to know who else would be attending the conference. I told him I would let him know shortly, called up the Prime Minister, and obtained the tentative list of invitees for the Air Marshal. He agreed to attend.

The conference came at the time when the Geneva Accord was about to be signed and implemented. The idea behind contacting the Air Marshal before others from the opposition was that if he had declined the invitation, the rest of the opposition may well

have done the same. However, all went ahead as planned, and the Geneva Accord was signed on 14 April 1988.

\* \* \* \*

The early part of the year 1987 had found the Chaudhrys of Gujrat, the MPA Dareshak, and others in a head-on collision with the Chief Minister of Punjab, Mian Nawaz Sharif, against whom they had levelled no less than forty-four charges. The charge sheet was handed over to the Prime Minister, as a result of which he constituted an investigative committee comprising Justice (retd) Senator Zaki-ud-Din Pall, Khawaja Mohammad Safdar (MNA), and I. We were to go through a complete dossier of the charges and present our findings to the Prime Minister. The committee met in the Chamba House, Lahore. The complainants did not appear before us, but I asked MPA Dareshak if the charges included any or all of the following violations:

- a. Had the Pakistan constitution been violated?
- b. Had the constitution of the Party been violated?
- c. Had the Punjab Chief Minister pocketed money to benefit himself?

He said that the Chief Minister had transferred a police officer at the request of an MNA. When the Prime Minister asked me about the committee's progress on the matter, I told him that the case should not have been referred to us in the first place, and secondly, that Nawaz Sharif was doing all he could to organise the Muslim League in the Punjab. I recommended that he drop his inquiry and let the Chief Minister carry on his work in peace. The Prime Minister agreed and the committee and its investigation were disbanded.

\* \* \* \*

Upon our return, the US ambassador invited me for lunch where I broached the subject of the American concern over Pakistan's uranium enrichment and Senator Solarz's claim that they have the means to monitor our activities. A slight smile appeared on the ambassador's face. I was looking him straight in the eyes and concluded that the ambassador's smile was proof that Senator Solarz was trying to pull a fast one on us. They really did not know to what extent we had advanced. I felt they were getting information from Pakistani officials who were unable to control themselves after a drink or two and indulged in loose talk to make themselves look important in the eyes of the Americans or from the electricity being consumed at Kahuta for enrichment of uranium.

I met the President the next day in Swat, and told him that the Americans did suspect what we were up to but did not have precise information. 'We must continue whatever we are doing,' I reiterated. 'And continue to deny their claims, and continue to ask for proof which they will not provide.'

'Don't worry Gohar, I too am a good poker player,' the President replied, smiling. And he thanked me for doing a good job of assisting the delegation in the US.

\* \* \* \*

Benazir Bhutto was planning to come back to Pakistan in mid-1986 after a period of self-exile abroad. There were many in the government and in the Muslim League advising the Prime Minister not to allow her free access in the country or to allow her to lead processions. They even went to the extent of advising him to arrest her. I suggested to Mr Junejo that he allow Benazir the freedom to do as she pleases, or else it would be used against him.

When Benazir arrived in Lahore, a charged, mammoth crowd was there to receive her. She addressed the crowds, led processions, travelled up and down the country, but within a

month the excitement died down. Benazir was now relegated to the inner pages of the newspapers, attending weddings or offering condolences on the death of some personality or the other. The statements she began to issue reflected her lack of following and need to re-emerge as a popular figure in the public eye.

\* \* \* \*

Some cabinet members who were supposedly close to Mr Junejo went to the President to ask for his removal. The Minister for Education, Mr Naseem Aheer, came to my residence on 12 May 1988, and told me that in fifteen days my *yaar* would be removed from his post. The Interior Minister, Aslam Khan Khattak, was also amongst the ones pushing for Junejo's removal. Both of them thought they would be made Prime Minister in his stead.

The next day, I wanted to see Prime Minister Junejo to warn him about what was being planned. He had put me in so many committees that he felt that this was a routine meeting and said he would call me back. But before we had the chance to talk, the National Assembly had been dissolved and the cabinet removed under Article 58(2)(b). The day after that, Mr Junejo called me to ask what I had wanted to speak to him about. 'I did want to talk to you, *Sain*, but now it will not help. I wanted to warn you of the plans against you. You may or may not have been able to control it.'

The dissolution of the National and Provincial Assemblies was announced on the evening of 28 May 1988. General Ziaul Haq had scrapped a system that he himself had instituted. No caretaker prime minister was appointed and neither did General Ziaul Haq accept the constitutional provision of holding elections in ninety days. He maintained that the elections were to be held ninety days from the day that the decision to hold elections was announced. This decision, along with the dissolution of the assembly, was totally illegal.

After the dismissal, General Ziaul Haq invited Mr Junejo for dinner and told him that he would be retaining some members of his cabinet as ministers. 'Am I the only "rascal" of that cabinet?' asked Junejo. The General did not reply.

Junejo was a gentleman and a democrat. He tried hard to have democracy take root in the country.

The dissolution of the National Assembly was taken to the Supreme Court on 24 October 1988. The Court deemed this action to be a violation of the constitution, but it did not give any rulings calling for the restoration of the government or the assembly on the grounds that the election process had been started. The latter part of this judgment could have been the result of General Mirza Aslam Beg's 'advice' to the Supreme Court passed to them by an important personality not to restore the cabinet or the National Assembly.

The truth is that General Ziaul Haq had no solid ground for Junejo's dismissal. Besides, by doing so, he opened the door wide for Benazir Bhutto to become the prime minister, a possibility which he had been trying to avert. He would surely have had to swear her in as prime minister had he lived till then. But General Zia's reign came to a rather abrupt end shortly after the dissolution of the government.



PART TWO

**IN THE CORRIDORS  
OF POWER**

# 19

## SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WHEN THE NATIONAL Assembly was dissolved, a caretaker cabinet was put in its place, but without a Prime Minister. General Ziaul Haq found himself in some difficulty, as he saw that the parties he was supporting would not win the election. The PPP would almost certainly be the victors.

On 6 August 1988, I went to see Naseem Aheer, the former Minister for Education, to discuss the situation with him. Brigadier Imtiaz Ahmad was in Mr Aheer's house when I arrived. (Brigadier Imtiaz Ahmad was Director of Internal Security; he handled political affairs in the ISI). They were discussing the formation of the IJI (Islami Jamhoori Ittehad)—comprised of nine political parties—and its decision to nominate joint candidates to face the PPP in the forthcoming general elections.

Shortly afterwards, on 17 August 1988, came the crash of the C-130 which was carrying President General Ziaul Haq, twenty-one senior army officers, and the US ambassador. I was in London when it happened. I immediately turned on the television, and there it was, written in bold letters on a flashing strip moving along the bottom of the screen: General Ziaul Haq was dead.

\* \* \* \*

General Mirza Aslam Beg, having been General Ziaul Haq's Vice Chief of Army Staff, became the Chief. Ghulam Ishaq Khan

(Chairman of the Senate) became the Acting President. A few days later, dates for the general elections were announced.

I started my election campaign in Haripur. Two candidates were expected to oppose me. One was Mrs Nasrum Minallah, who had been an MNA and would be running from the PPP platform; and the other was Omar Asghar Khan from the Tehrik-i-Istiqlal. Campaigning turned out to be a big challenge as my mother was ill; I would be away in fairly remote areas when I'd receive a message saying that my mother was very sick. I would then rush back to Islamabad, leaving my brother and cousins to cancel all the public meetings we had scheduled in numerous villages. After these repeated cancellations, I felt that our absences would start to have an adverse effect on our campaign. In any case it was expected that with Benazir as their head, the PPP would win the election even if she won a simple majority. My assessment was that her government would not last very long anyway. And so for all these reasons, but mainly to be with my ailing mother, I withdrew from the contest before filing my nomination papers.

The 1988 elections were fiercely contested. The IJI did not win a majority. Neither did the PPP. The constitution at that time required that the President nominate a person for the post of prime minister who he thought had the support of the majority.

Two American officials from the US had arrived in Islamabad on 28 November 1988. (One of them was Assistant Secretary Defence Richard Armitage.) At a dinner in the American embassy that night, Mr Armitage took me aside and told me that he was carrying two letters: one was for the President and the other for Benazir Bhutto. I asked what the letter to Benazir contained. Armitage said it was a congratulatory note from President Reagan with a postscript that read: 'I hope you become the Prime Minister.' I'm sure the message in the letter to President Ghulam Ishaq Khan was no less clear. Later, I would tease

Benazir by saying that she became a Prime Minister on a postscript note.

Predictably enough, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan nominated Benazir for Prime Minister, and she was sworn in on 2 December 1988. The Speaker and Deputy Speakers were sworn in the very next day. Appointments were made quickly to ensure that Benazir had at least a thin majority with which to form her government. She made sure to win the allegiance of members from the FATA, the independents, and minority members, so as to have as wide a support base as possible. The requirement was that the election of the Speaker would be held first and the next day the Prime Minister's. To ensure Benazir was put in a position to garner support, the President had her nominated first and also elected, to achieve the desire of President Reagan.

In Punjab, the majority belonged to Nawaz Sharif. Benazir tried to prevent him from being sworn in as Chief Minister. It was an ill-advised move and brought the two of them into direct confrontation with each other. Benazir did everything possible to damage Nawaz Sharif's family businesses: filing tax cases, investigating possible electricity theft in their industries, ordering state-owned banks to withdraw their loans to the Sharif family, stopping the provision of railway bogies to block the transport of scrap and iron bars to their steel industries. For months, the cargo ship *Jonathan* was not given permission to offload its scrap steel cargo meant for the Ittefaq Industries.

As a result of this rivalry, Benazir created a lot of hostility against herself in the Punjab. Stepping out of the Islamabad airport meant stepping into Nawaz Sharif's territory. Considering the circumstances—and especially since all the PPP members in the National Assembly and the Senate could be caught up in fighting court cases—she could have been denied police security, protocol, and even obedience from officials in the Punjab, if Nawaz Sharif had ordered as much.

It goes without saying that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's execution had a profound effect on Benazir. However, she was caught in two

minds about how to play her cards: on the one hand, she went on a tour of the US (soon after becoming PM) to advocate for the creation of a group of countries which would take collective action against military takeovers; on the other hand, she appointed a retired general to be the Director General of the ISI, and awarded the 'democracy medal' to the military. She tried hard to win the military over to her side, in fact, without making it public. The hanging of her father by a military man was bound to play on her mind for some time to come.

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The leader of the opposition, Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, moved a vote of no-confidence against Benazir. It did not come as a surprise to anyone; after all, Benazir was ruling with a paper-thin majority, and political tensions were high. When the no-confidence motion was moved, Benazir took all her MNAs to Swat in a C-130 air force plane. Nawaz Sharif put some of his members up in the Marriott in Islamabad, and others in Changa Manga and Murree. By removing their members from centre-stage, both Benazir and Nawaz Sharif were trying to ensure that their supporters were not bought over by the rival. Despite that, huge sums were offered to various members to ensure their loyalty or to switch it.

As it turned out, the government in the centre had the advantage over the Punjab government. Some of Nawaz Sharif's supporters joined Benazir. The vote of no-confidence failed. Normally, the failure of a no-confidence motion would strengthen the prime minister's position, but in this case it only highlighted the fragility of Benazir's rule. Corruption, mismanagement and political confrontations increased.

On 6 August 1990, Benazir's government was removed by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan under Article 58(2)(b). The National Assembly again stood dissolved. A caretaker federal cabinet was formed under caretaker Prime Minister, Ghulam

Mustafa Jatoi. Mian Nawaz Sharif continued as the caretaker Chief Minister of Punjab, and thus had all the required resources available during his election campaign. He toured the entire country attacking the PPP and Benazir. In any case, after Benazir's ouster, the majority of voters had understood that the allegations against her would not allow her to come back as Prime Minister. The viable alternative was thus the young upcoming leader Nawaz Sharif who had emerged in the Punjab as the strongest candidate opposing Benazir and the PPP.

General elections were held within the ninety days stipulated under the constitution. The IJI won the elections in October 1990 with an overwhelming majority. A lion's share of the seats went to the Muslim League. I defeated Omar Asghar Khan of the Tehrik-e-Istiqlal in Haripur.

After the elections, Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi tried to muster support from the MNAs to become Prime Minister. He failed, mainly due to quick moves by Nawaz Sharif. In any case, with a majority of the IJI members openly supporting Nawaz Sharif, Jatoi didn't stand much of a chance.

Consultations then began for the nominee for the post of Speaker of the National Assembly. In the party meeting held in the National Assembly cafeteria, Nawaz Sharif proposed Aslam Khan Khattak's name. Aslam Khan Khattak was an experienced politician and a diplomat, and he had held practically every government office in all departments. But there was hardly any response from the floor when the suggestion was made, and as soon as the meeting was over, members began to mutter their disapproval; they believed that Aslam Khan Khattak had a hand in the dismissal of Junejo's government. By the afternoon, the members had decided that they were not going to vote for Aslam Khan Khattak and would also withhold their vote for Nawaz Sharif when the time came for voting for the Prime Minister. Hectic efforts were made to find another candidate for Speaker. Nawaz Sharif suggested Sardar Mehtab Abbasi, whilst I suggested General (retd) Majeed Malik and Zahid Sarfraz proposed my

name. When Nawaz Sharif called me later that evening to ask if I would accept the office of Speaker, I replied in the affirmative.

Election to the posts of Speaker and Deputy Speaker were smooth. I was sworn in by Malik Meraj Khalid, the Speaker of the previous assembly. The next day I called on President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, and the day after on Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. I thanked Nawaz Sharif for reposing his confidence in me and told him that I knew most of the members of parliament (including Benazir) and running the House would not be a problem—given, I added, that I were allowed a free hand in running the House. Nawaz Sharif gave me his word.

As I was taking my leave, I said to Nawaz Sharif: 'I am senior in age to you. I have seen a lot during my father's time and I have been in a death cell for eighteen months. I have seen the best and the worst of life, and have gained some experience thus. Keep four things in mind to ensure your success: keep good relations with the President, the Army Chief, the Americans, and make no open declarations of war against India.' By this time, his attention was waning.

'Nice watch,' he remarked, eyeing my wrist watch.

I told him that the watch had been given to me by my father and was thirty-one years old.

'Looks brand new,' he said.

'We are 217 members in the House,' I continued. 'Everyone wants to be the Prime Minister, but you are first amongst equals. My effort will be to strengthen the democratic system for which I would require both your and the opposition's help and cooperation.'

I left it at that.

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Asif Ali Zardari was under detention during the 1990 elections. Nonetheless, he won his seat and was brought to the National Assembly. Zahid Sarfraz, who was the interior minister in the

caretaker government of Mr Jatoi, made arrangements so that Zardari could stay on in Islamabad with Benazir for a few days. When I announced this decision in the Assembly, Benazir was delighted.

Two days after becoming Speaker, I hosted a dinner for all members of the National Assembly, including the PM and the leader of the opposition, Benazir. Both attended and sat to the left and right of me during the function. I deliberately made them sit close to one another as I wanted them to move towards accepting one another and working together, without which they would be unable to fulfil their duties to the country and instead expend all their energy on fighting each other. But that evening they were pleasant to each other. It was a good start indeed.

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Syed Ghous Ali Shah, an MNA candidate from Sindh, had been defeated in his own constituency but was subsequently elected from the Punjab in a by-election. After he was sworn in (as an MNA), Nawaz Sharif decided that he wanted to make him Speaker. When I confronted Nawaz Sharif on the issue, he offered to give me any ministry I wished for as a replacement. I told him that was unacceptable; if his intention had been to appoint someone else as Speaker, I should not have been given the post in the first place. 'You are trying to humiliate me,' I said to him. Nawaz Sharif responded by embracing me, and asked me to forget all that had been said. I would remain the Speaker.

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A reporter of the *Khaleej Times* (a UAE newspaper) came to interview me a few days after I was sworn in as Speaker. Among the questions he asked me was the question: 'If you were still in the army, what would your rank have been?'



'If I was still in the army,' I told him, 'I would probably not have been allowed to move higher in rank than a Major and would have been shunted from office to office due to my political connections. Actually, I would most likely have been shunted out much earlier for defending my father in all public discussions and conferences and for picking quarrels with officers who spoke against Father or his policies. But had the political biases not come into play, it is possible that I would have taken over from General Aslam Beg as the Army Chief.'

He then asked me who were in line to take over as Army Chief. I replied 'Lieutenant General Shamim Alam my course mate, and Lieutenant General Asif Nawaz a course junior to Shamim Alam.'

This small item, reported in the *Khaleej Times*, was subsequently picked up by an Urdu newspaper. General Aslam Beg saw this news item and went, along with the two services Chiefs and the Joint Chief of Staff, to discuss it with the Prime Minister. General Beg told the Prime Minister: 'Your Speaker should remain a Speaker or become a General.'

Some days later, when the PM and I were in his car driving to a dinner function, he asked me about the news report. I explained the background of the story to him. At our destination, we were received—ironically—by none other than General Aslam Beg. After exchanging pleasantries, I took General Beg aside and asked him why he had complained to the Prime Minister about my comments. He wouldn't give me a straight answer and mumbled something about not wanting uncertainty about his office. He was desperate for an extension in service, in fact, which was not granted.

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A parliamentary delegation was being put together for a visit to Australia in the first week of December 1990. Since I wanted the delegation to be representative of all parties, I included Begum

Nusrat Bhutto as a member despite being told that she would embarrass me and steal the attention of the media. Begum Nusrat Bhutto was happy to be included. I called her to my chamber and told her a few things about the procedure that the delegation would follow. I told her that:

- (a) I would open the talks and then give all the members an opportunity to say a few words if they so wanted, but she would be the next to speak after me;
- (b) Her remarks could in no way be against Pakistan, but she could nevertheless talk about the difficulties she and her family or party were facing;
- (c) She would be obliged to accompany the delegation to all functions.

Begum Nusrat Bhutto was happy that some ground rules had been set and expressed her intention not to speak to the media during the tour. In fact, she conducted herself extremely well throughout the tour. At the final leg of the trip, we were having lunch at the Sydney harbour and I asked her: 'Begum Sahiba, what do you wish for these days?'

She closed her eyes and said, 'To be ambassador to a European country.'

'Done,' I said.

'You're not serious?'

'I'm very serious. Name the country.'

'France—I would like to go to France.'

'Done,' I said. 'Prepare yourself.'

Upon our return to Pakistan, I spoke to the Prime Minister about the matter. He accepted my request, and I called Begum Nusrat Bhutto to inform her that her posting to France had been confirmed. She said she would give me her final decision the next morning. When I called her the next day, she declined the posting. It seems she had been reprimanded by Benazir who may have felt that I was trying to drive a wedge between mother and

daughter, or perhaps that I had ulterior motives for offering Nusrat the posting to damage the image of the PPP.

Apart from meeting the Speaker of the Australian parliament, we also met the Prime Minister and put forward our views on Kashmir and our desire for better relations and further interaction between the two parliaments. During our meeting with the foreign affairs committee, I mentioned that the Central Asian republics were ready to break away from the Soviet Union but did not want to accelerate the process for fear of a strong reaction from Moscow. They would wait, I told them, till the Baltic States broke away and then the East Europeans would follow suit. I also mentioned that we had been sending the Holy Quran to the Grand Mufti in Tashkent and, as this was becoming difficult, we had dismantled a printing press and shipped it in parts to Tashkent for the Holy Quran to be printed there. The chairman asked me when I thought the Soviet Union would disintegrate. Soon, I told him. I went on to advise him to keep a good relationship with us, so that Australia would have access to the Central Asian republics when they broke away from Moscow.

From Australia I flew to Hong Kong on my way to North Korea to lead another Pakistani delegation. Our delegation was well received in Pyongyang and given high-profile publicity. We met Mr Kim Il Sung, who was considered a god by the North Koreans. I thanked him for the support North Korea had provided us in various fields over many years. (In the seventies North Korea had given Pakistan the 120mm Russian guns that were not being produced in China). After the formal meeting, we were taken to a hall where the carpet I had brought him as a gift was laid out on a table. President Kim Il Sung ran his fingers over the weave admiringly and thanked me. All of this was telecast live for the North Korean people.

On the first night in our hotel in Pyongyang, Zeb found the pillows very hard. She requested the protocol officer to ask the hotel housekeeper if they had softer pillows. This was at 9:00 p.m.

At 1:30 a.m. the protocol officer knocked on our door. When I opened it, he was all smiles and had two pillows in his hands. 'Where did you get them at this late hour?' 'I had a factory opened up to produce these two pillows for Madam,' he said with pride.

I led a parliamentary delegation to Turkey in the second week of January 1991. The delegation was met at Ankara airport by the Turkish Speaker, Mr Kaya Erdem, and his wife. I sat in his car while Zeb travelled separately with his wife. At night, the Turkish Speaker hosted a banquet for our delegation. Dinner was followed by speeches. I supported North Cyprus in my speech, and the Turkish Speaker supported the Kashmir cause in his. Speeches were followed by an excellent cultural show.

The next day we met the foreign minister and President Turgut Ozal, who was extremely busy due to the imminent attack on Iraq by the Americans. I requested the President to make a last-ditch effort to avert the war by arranging for the presidents of Turkey, Egypt and Pakistan to go to Saddam Hussain and persuade him to end the hostilities. The Turkish President was not hopeful about the outcome of such a meeting, and clearly said that he thought Saddam was a mad man. Mr Ozal said that he had once told Saddam that the Americans would fire 500 cruise missiles into Iraq. Saddam's reply had been to say that even a common Iraqi shepherd could bring down a cruise missile simply with the use of his stick. It was evidently no use trying to persuade a man like Saddam.

After our engagements in Ankara were over, we left by coach for Konia. Before entering Konia, we were met on the road by the governor and his police chief. The governor was a lively person, very educated and cultured. Later in the evening, he took us to the mausoleum of Rumi where we offered *fateha*. After that he took us to a place next to the mausoleum where the dancing dervishes performed. It was a great experience for me. The governor was well-versed in the works of both Iqbal and Rumi, and he frequently quoted from both. The dinner that followed—

hosted by the governor—was a typical Turkish spread. One item I remember in particular—apart from the kebabs—was the pure white honey in its comb, cut into small pieces like toffee and served with cheese and Turkish bread.

We then proceeded to Antalya. There too the local governor hosted a banquet in our honour. He told us that in the year 1990 alone, 200 international flights had landed per day at Antalya, bringing in tourists by the hordes. There were nearly 300 five-star hotels in the city and yet more were being constructed. The local authority had been giving away plots of land on a lease of thirty-three years for the construction of hotels, after which the hotel would become the property of the local authority which could then re-negotiate with the initial entrepreneur for another thirty-three year term. They were earning nearly US\$7 billion from their tourist industry and US\$5 billion from the suitcase trade of the former Soviet states whose tourists were taking back Turkish goods in their suitcases to their countries.

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Soon after I returned from Turkey, the Speaker of the Iranian Majlis, Mehdi Karoubi, came to Pakistan. He brought a delegation of ninety members, which included ten ministers and the famous Ayatollah Khalkheli. Mr Mehdi Karoubi was bringing ministers with him for discussions on defence, development projects and other serious matters. The Speaker in Pakistan does not involve himself with the executive affairs of the ministries, other than what comes before him in the House. I spoke about this with the President and the Prime Minister, and both of them said I should carry on negotiations with the Iranian Speaker and call in the ministers only if required. It was also decided that the Iranian Speaker would be given a guard of honour and that he would address the National Assembly. Protocol-wise in Iran—according to the Iranian constitution—the Speaker has the same rank as

the President. We would thus give Mr Mehdi Karoubi the same protocol as that which we would give to a head of state.

At the conclusion of the talks with the Iranian delegation, the following decisions were reached:

- (a) Iran would help build an oil refinery near Karachi for 120,000 barrels, and the surplus 80,000 ton oil would be exported to the Iranian provinces of Sistan and Iranian Balochistan;
- (b) Pakistan would connect and build the railway line from Mashhad to Kirman;
- (c) Iran would place \$25 million in a revolving fund from which it would buy arms and ammunition from Pakistan;
- (d) And finally, fishermen arrested by Iran would be released, along with their launches.

The Iranians' visit turned out to be quite successful.

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It was June 1991 that Benazir came to my chamber. She was accompanied by Iftikhar Gilani and Jehangir Badar. I requested both gentlemen to give us time to talk alone. When they left to wait in a side room, I told her that she needed to come to an agreement with the government if she wanted relief for Asif Zardari. 'There are so many cases against Asif Zardari that it will be a long time before he clears himself,' I said to her. 'And you have two young children to consider.'

Benazir began to weep and continued to do so all through our one-and-a-half-hour conversation. I wanted to help her and her family and tried to improve her situation. But sadly, a few days later, she issued a statement saying that the Speaker had threatened her with the possible hanging of her husband if she did not cooperate with the government.

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The election of the President of the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) was due in October 1991 in Santiago, Chile. The only candidate was Sir Michael Marshal, the sitting President. There had never been a permanent IPU President from Asia, and we saw this as a good opportunity for Pakistan. So, using the funds meant for MNAs' foreign tours, delegations were sent to various countries to lobby for my candidacy. In the end, despite having the advantage of being a sitting member of parliament for over thirty years, Sir Michael Marshal won only by a small margin: 88 votes to my 60. The gap could have been narrowed further had Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Albania, Djibouti and Cape Verde been present at the elections. That one member each from Iran and Algeria were out shopping did not help matters much either. Nearly half of the group of 26 Latin American countries, i.e. 26 members would have voted for me, but a lower court in Peshawar killed my chances; a day before the elections, two Americans in Peshawar were convicted and sentenced to decapitation of a hand and a foot. The legal proceedings were repeatedly shown on CNN, and the moment I saw that on TV, I knew that there was not the slightest chance of my winning.

Regardless, my campaign involved a very good effort from the members and staff of the National Assembly. I invited Sir Michael Marshal to visit Pakistan, and he accepted. He left delighted with his trip. In retrospect, it occurs to me that had I been elected the President of the IPU, I would have found myself in an awkward position considering that soon afterwards the National Assembly was dissolved twice within a few months, and as President of the IPU, I would have had to move resolutions against Pakistan.

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New procedures and rules of conduct were framed for the Pakistani parliament in August 1992. The new rules gave considerable powers to the chairperson of a parliamentary committee. Rule 90 was incorporated which gave the Speaker

and Chairperson of a committee powers which no other parliament in the world has. Under Rule 90, a member who is in police custody or undergoing trial can be summoned to the National Assembly. Under Rule 182(4), a committee may examine the expenditure of a ministry and in this way the chairperson can effectively play the role of minister in some regards.

Before Rule 90 was operative, I had to put a lot of pressure on Jam Sadiq Ali, Chief Minister of Sindh, to bring Zardari to the National Assembly sessions. Jam Sadiq began giving statements against me in the press, as he did not want Zardari to be provided any relief. I wanted a congenial atmosphere to prevail in the House, and in order to fulfil that objective it was necessary for me to take Benazir along, and by default, to bring husband and wife together from time to time. I was once asked by the President whether I was the Speaker of the National Assembly or marriage councillor. The truth is that I wanted to take Benazir along because I wanted democracy to finally take root in the Pakistani political process and wanted to ensure that the Opposition (of which Benazir was the leader at the time) was established as an important pillar of the political process. An Opposition that extends outside of the Assembly means a short life for the House, as issues which are not discussed and resolved within the Assembly are then made public and create further conflict in the streets.

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Getting a quorum in the National Assembly sessions was a major problem. Hardly any of the members would be present in the House at the scheduled time. To at least maintain a semblance of decorum, I would start the session on time and adjourn the House if a lack of quorum persisted even after summoning the members.



One day, there were hardly thirty-two members in the House. (The total number of ministers, parliamentary secretaries, chairpersons of committees, including the Prime Minister, was ninety). As soon as the *tilawat* was over and I announced the question hour, the Prime Minister walked in, accompanied by a few others. They took their seats. Shabbir Ahmad Chandio, a PPP MNA, jumped up and pointed out the lack of quorum. The prescribed practice was adopted and members present counted. By then the figure had gone up to thirty-five. The quorum bells were rung for five minutes, and the figure went up to forty. I did another recount and since there was still no quorum, I announced that the House stood adjourned till 10 a.m. the next day. The members rose from their seats and left the hall. The Prime Minister stood up and looked left and right, unable to comprehend what had happened. The ministers got together in the Prime Minister's chamber afterwards and told him that it was the Speaker who had let them down and adjourned the House too quickly.

At a dinner function two weeks later, the Prime Minister asked me why I would so readily announce a lack of quorum and adjourn the Assembly. I explained to him that the House rules and the constitution give clear directions on the action that should be taken in the event of a lack of quorum, regardless of how frequently it occurs. Besides, I asked him, why could his battalion of ministers, parliamentary secretaries and chairpersons never be punctual?

The cabinet members, with a few exceptions, never came prepared to answer questions during the question hour. They would always defer their reply to the next rota day. I wanted to end this practice. I instituted the rule that whatever information was available at that moment was to be provided, and additional information, if required, could be supplied later.

The Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan called on me in February 1991. I raised with him the issue of Kashmir and advocated closer ties between the National Assembly and the Lok Sabha. One moment in particular that I remember from that meeting is Mr J.N. Dixit turning around and saying to me: 'Speaker Sahib, my younger brother is serving in the Indian Air Force and is stationed in Srinagar. He says he is not prepared to lay down his life for Kashmir. Take that for what it is worth.'

I was truly surprised to hear such a frank comment from an Indian High Commissioner.

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In early June 1991, US ambassador, Robert Oakley came to see me. Nawaz Sharif had been refusing to see him, and the ambassador thought he could get his message across to the Prime Minister through me. Ambassador Oakley had a note with him which stated, among other things, that Pakistan had crossed the red line. I told him I didn't understand which red line he was talking about. He explained that it was with regards to our uranium enrichment activities which had gone above 95 per cent enrichment and had put us in a position to assemble a number of nuclear weapons. I promised to convey his message to the Prime Minister, who was in Murree at the time. As concluding remark, perhaps as a joke, Ambassador Oakley said: 'What you have looks like a duck, waddles like a duck; hence it must be a duck.'

'Oh, it certainly is a duck,' I laughed.

Mr Oakley leaned forward, looking me straight in the eye.

'Yes, it is a duck,' I continued. 'You see, you Americans do not play cricket—in cricket, duck means zero. We are at zero enrichment, see?'

The ambassador did not find my remark funny.

After the meeting with Oakley, I went to Murree to see Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif who was staying in the Governor House

with his brother Shahbaz Sharif. Zeb accompanied me. I explained the concerns of the US ambassador to him but Nawaz Sharif either did not understand what I was saying or he was too preoccupied with General Aslam Beg, who he suspected was trying to destabilize the government and attempt a takeover. The conversation inevitably turned to concerns about a possible coup. First Shahbaz Sharif and then Nawaz Sharif asked me if I thought it was possible. I told them that yes, it was possible, but I thought such a move would be premature on the army's part; after all, we had hardly been in office for seven months!

It had begun to rain when Nawaz Sharif and Shahbaz Sharif came out to see me and Zeb off. As my car, a beat-up Toyota, was being brought up the driveway, Nawaz Sharif asked with surprise, 'Is this your car?' I nodded. With a wave of his hand, he told the driver to take it away and ordered his Mercedes sports car to be brought in; a sleek and beautiful car. The Prime Minister made me sit next to him and showed me the controls. He then ordered me into the driver's seat, waved to us, and told me to keep the car. Not wanting to offend him, I drove the car from Murree to my home in Islamabad. The next morning I drove the car back to Murree and left it with the Prime Minister's house staff. When he met me next, he asked: 'Why did you return the car? You should have kept it.' I shook my head and thanked him for the gesture.

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Asif Nawaz was posted to the GHQ after the death of General Ziaul Haq. It was becoming evident that after the retirement of General Aslam Beg, he would be second only to Lieutenant General Shamim Alam in seniority, and one of them would definitely become the next Chief of Army Staff. (The two of them were also dear friends). I and others suggested that Lieutenant General Asif Nawaz be made Chief of Army Staff, but Nawaz Sharif was inclined towards Lieutenant General Hameed Gul,

who was junior to Asif Nawaz. Lieutenant General Hameed Gul had been in the ISI and had dealt with Afghanistan, and moreover, he had good relations with the Sharif brothers. Lieutenant General Hameed Gul's son-in-law and nephew, Squadron Leader Yousaf Gul, was Nawaz Sharif's ADC.

Lieutenant General Asif Nawaz was designated the next Chief of Army Staff a few months before General Beg's retirement. This was possibly done to stem the rumours of a coup by General Aslam Beg. He took over office on 16 August 1991. He was due to proceed to the US on tour soon after, so prior to his departure General Asif Nawaz, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and I got together for our usual breakfast meeting. At breakfast, General Asif Nawaz told the Prime Minister that he was posting Lieutenant General Hameed Gul as Chairman of the Pakistan Ordnance Factories (POF) at Wah, and that Lieutenant General Hameed Gul would have to report to the POF within the following three days in order to avoid having action taken against him. General Asif Nawaz also requested that Lieutenant General Zahid Ali Akbar be allowed to stay on as the Chairman of WAPDA. Nawaz Sharif, on the other hand, wanted to remove him. After General Asif Nawaz left the meeting, I told Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to let Lieutenant General Zahid Ali Akbar complete his contract, if only to avoid muddying the waters on so petty an issue.

When General Asif Nawaz left for the US, Shahbaz Sharif invited Lieutenant General Hameed Gul to the office of the Ministry of Defence in Rawalpindi. When General Asif Nawaz got wind of this, he was not at all pleased. He reiterated to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif upon his return that Hameed Gul must report to Wah and take over as Chairman POF. The Prime Minister remained silent for a while, and then said, 'General Sahib, you can go ahead and take the necessary action.'

Lieutenant General Hameed Gul refused the posting and decided to retire from the army.

Strains had crept in between the Prime Minister and the Army Chief despite my best efforts to ensure a good relationship between them. There were various incidents which led up to the buildup of tensions. For instance, Shahbaz Sharif invited a Lieutenant General to come and meet him in Lahore—how did the PM expect the Army Chief not to know about it? General Asif Nawaz summoned this Lieutenant General to the GHQ and kept him waiting for over two hours before seeing him. When he finally called him in, he did not offer him a seat and gave him a harsh lecture telling him to do the duties assigned to him instead of cavorting with politicians.

Another instance that gave rise to suspicion and mistrust between Nawaz Sharif and Asif Nawaz occurred in the PM House. A few MNAs were lingering around when someone close to the PM announced that they would make a 'General Gul Hassan' out of General Asif Nawaz. (Lieutenant General Gul Hassan had been taken away in a car during Bhutto's rule and forced to resign.) One of the MNAs who had heard the comment took it straight to General Asif Nawaz. After that incident, General Asif Nawaz began to bring an additional escort with him when he came from Rawalpindi to Islamabad.

Once after a function at the PM House, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif wanted to speak to the Army Chief alone. The PM's Military Secretary approached General Asif Nawaz to inform him that the Prime Minister asked that he stay back as he wanted to discuss a few matters privately with him. Believing that the Gul Hassan plan was being put into effect, General Asif Nawaz told the Military Secretary that he would meet the Prime Minister another day. When Nawaz Sharif was told that the Army Chief had left, he hit the roof. The next day he went to President Ghulam Ishaq Khan asking that General Asif Nawaz be removed. The President flatly refused to do so. That is when Ghulam Ishaq Khan and General Asif Nawaz started to become close.

Political tensions between Benazir and Nawaz Sharif were starting to weigh heavily on the latter. He called me to his chamber and asked me to arrange for Benazir to meet him in the PM House for a meal. I told him that a neutral place like the Speaker's lounge may be better, but he shook his head. I contacted Benazir and conveyed the PM's invitation to her. She in turn requested that Nawaz Sharif first come to her residence, have a cup of tea, and only then she would be willing to go to the PM House. To this, Nawaz Sharif replied, 'Please, please, Speaker Sahib, bring her here.' I again proposed to him the neutral space of the Speaker's chamber, but he was adamant that she come to the PM House. Both leaders were ready for talks which would, at the very least, have reduced the confrontation between them, but neither could agree on where and how to meet. I could not let this opportunity go by without trying harder.

And so, without asking the Prime Minister, I brought General Asif Nawaz into the loop. Benazir was going to Karachi for the 1992 new year, so the meeting could not take place in Islamabad. General Asif Nawaz spoke to Benazir. She nearly jumped out of her skin at having been called by the Army Chief and agreed to a meeting in Karachi. I was not in favour of holding the meeting in Karachi; Jam Sadiq Ali (the Chief Minister) would be aggressive and Fakhruddin G. Ibrahim (the Governor of Sindh) would report the meeting to the President, which would unnecessarily make waves. Regardless, it was decided that the meeting would be held in Karachi. Nawaz Sharif was informed and he consented. An agreement had been reached with the Governor that only the Prime Minister, Benazir and I would be present at these talks—which would take place over lunch at the Governor House. I told Nawaz Sharif that I did not like this arrangement. 'Don't worry, it'll be fine,' he said to me.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and I were to fly to Karachi on the morning of 1 January 1992. At 5:00 p.m. the evening before,

I was strolling in my lawn when I saw Nawaz Sharif drive into the porch in an unmarked white Toyota Corolla. 'Is everything okay?' I asked him as he stepped out of the car.

He embraced me. 'Speaker sahib,' he said. 'I am very sorry that I will be embarrassing you so much.'

'What is it?'

'Well, it's that Abbaji just does not agree to my meeting Benazir.'

'If that is your final decision,' I said to him, 'I will inform everyone that the meeting is off.'

Later that evening I was at the PM House. General Asif Nawaz was also present. I told him about the cancellation. 'Gohar,' he said. 'Let's stop intervening in matters where Abbaji is the final decision maker.'

\* \* \* \*

On 14 October 1992, both General Asif Nawaz and I went to 5 Punjab Sher-Dils for the annual Dushak Day parade in Sialkot. During lunch in the Division Mess, he said to me, 'Gohar, this Billa, Brigadier Imtiaz Ahmad—he is the Director General of the Intelligence Bureau—he has produced a report trying to convince the Prime Minister that I will be taking over the government by mid-December 1992. This man is creating mischief.' He asked me to arrange a meeting with the three of us to clear things up.

The next time Nawaz Sharif came to the parliament, I went to see him in his chamber and put forward General Asif Nawaz's suggestion that they should meet. The Prime Minister told me he would give me a date and time for the meeting, but he never did. Relations between the Prime Minister and the Army Chief had deteriorated to such an extent that there was talk about the latter being removed while he was abroad. But before any such thing could happen, General Asif Nawaz died of a heart attack on 8 January 1993. I was leading a parliamentary delegation in

Iran at the time of his death. In the demise of General Asif Nawaz, I lost a dear friend, and Pakistan a leading soldier.

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While Benazir was PM, she had asked the nationalized banks to withdraw loans given to the Sharif family businesses, to the Chaudhry of Gujrat, and others. These businessmen were thus forced to borrow from private banks and from numerous cooperative societies who had lent money recklessly to a lot of individual concerns. The Chaudhrys had cleared their accounts with the cooperatives. With the news of some societies collapsing, there was a run on the cooperative societies. The Opposition did not move an adjournment motion or raise any other provision of the House rules to discuss the cooperative scandal which had gripped the country. I allowed a discussion on a point of order and probably created parliamentary history for carrying on a point of order for nine days. The truth, though, is that there was more disorder than order. The Prime Minister was away in Harare to attend the Commonwealth Conference, and he had decided to stay back after the conference to play cricket; essentially, to avoid the hype around the scandal. He thought the scandal would be all over before his return but he was unable to escape it and had to eventually speak on the issue in the House. Pensioners, widows and the poor lost practically all their savings. The President held the Prime Minister responsible for the collapse of the cooperatives. Our failure in the 1993 elections was largely due to this scandal in the Punjab.

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Nawaz Sharif was keen on building a motorway; he was anxious to be the next Sher Shah Suri (who had built the Grand Trunk Road). He had planned the motorway project earlier, when he



was Chief Minister, and continued to pursue the project after becoming Prime Minister.

Mir Afzal Khan, the Chief Minister of NWFP did not quite see eye to eye with Nawaz Sharif on the project, and opposed the Peshawar motorway project. 'Gohar Khan,' he said to me, 'The Prime Minister does not understand economics. What we need to do is widen the existing Grand Trunk Road and other roads instead of building motorways. Besides, there won't be enough traffic on the motorway to pay back the loans we'll have to take to build it.' I told Afzal Khan that Nawaz Sharif's family had nearly two dozen factories so they must have an understanding of finance. The Chief Minister was not convinced though, and thought that the Prime Minister was initiating projects and schemes that would destroy the country's economy rather than benefit it. In fact, a great deal of antagonism developed between Afzal Khan and the PM because of the motorway project.

That antagonism was expressed particularly in the instance when there was a persistent demand from the people of Haripur to upgrade Haripur from a *tehsil* to a district, as it was earning 60 per cent of the revenues of the Abbottabad district. A few local MPAs half-heartedly put this matter before the NWFP Assembly and the motion was defeated. I then took the matter up with the Prime Minister, who agreed to the change in status. I had the news announced on radio and television. When the NWFP Chief Minister heard of it, he reacted with anger at the fact that the federal government had made the decision, and asked to see the PM. Nawaz Sharif refused to meet him until he first carried out the change in status by a notification.

Similarly, I had been collecting funds for the electrification of villages in NWFP, but Mir Afzal Khan would not allow the use of these funds in Haripur. The funds were used and electrification work started despite his opposition.

Once, Nawaz Sharif and I went to watch a polo tournament in the Aibak grounds in Lahore. Nawaz Sharif was seated on a sofa in the centre, I sat on his right and the secretary of the polo club, a retired colonel, on his left. As the game got underway, the secretary asked me what my seniority in the army had been. When I told him, he exclaimed: 'You would have been the Army Chief had you stayed on in the army!' To which Nawaz Sharif immediately replied: 'Had he been the Army Chief he would have gotten rid of us in one year.' He realized at once that he should not have made that comment. He turned to me and said, 'Speaker Sahib, I am sorry. I did not mean that.'

However, I think he did mean it—perhaps more than he himself would be willing to concede.

# 20

## DISSOLUTION AND RESTORATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

THE YEAR 1992 saw a build-up of confrontation between the government and the opposition. There were frequent walkouts and episodes of shouting in the House, and the PPP continued to raise the issue of the Sharif family's cooperatives and industries. President Ghulam Ishaq Khan's address was often marred by table thumping and shouts of 'go, Baba, go!'

As the Speaker, I found myself in an awkward position at times. Once, while the President was giving a speech amid constant chatter and disorder in the House, the Chairman of the Senate passed me a note asking me not to interrupt the President's speech. When the President met me later, he was clearly unhappy with the proceedings and said I should have brought order to the House. I showed the President the Senate Chairman's note. Besides, if I had requested order but order was still not restored, (as the case would most likely have been,) then the next stage would have been calling in a sergeant-at-arms to remove the aggressive members from the House. What a day that would have been, with the entire House having a fist-fight right there in the Assembly!

President Ghulam Ishaq Khan then complained to me about how Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and others had been sitting quietly throughout the disarray and seemed to be enjoying his discomfort. 'This is your view, Mr President,' I replied. 'I feel we came out reasonably well, though not in decorum. You completed

your speech – and even if it was noisy, your message was still conveyed on TV and radio and reported in the press.’

The President remained unconvinced.

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The Ghazi Barotha project was brought to my attention by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan. I had been quite impressed with it. For some reason that I was unaware of at the time, the project was shelved. Though it was not my job, I requested a WAPDA representative to meet me and then give a briefing about the project. The NWFP Chief Secretary attended this meeting.

I discussed the Ghazi Barotha project with President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, who was in favour of the project. I also persuaded the Prime Minister to visit the project site. The Prime Minister and I took off by helicopter and landed at Ghazi, where people had collected to receive him. (It seems he forgot the name of the project because in his address he announced that ‘the project of the Speaker’ would be undertaken). A week later a meeting was held at the WAPDA rest house in Tarbela where the PC-I was approved and the project was given the green light. Benazir tried to lay the foundation stone and wanted to take credit for starting the project, but I threatened her and Khar (the Minister for Water and Power) in the National Assembly that if they laid the foundation stone it would be thrown into the Indus. Their commitment to the project is evident from the fact that neither of them visited the project site throughout their time in government.

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The floods of 1992 devastated parts of NWFP and Punjab. The Prime Minister left all his work and decided to tour the affected areas in his helicopter. I noticed that he was going to these areas in expensive attire, making evident his intention to stay away

from any intimate involvement with the affected families. I told him that he should mingle with the affectees, get into the sludge and dirty water, and help them build their washed-out houses and walls. As most of the people in the Punjab would be working in vests during the hot weather, he should take off his waistcoat and put it on a poor affected person's shoulders as a gesture. He took my advice and found a really weak man standing in the water with mud in his hands trying to repair his wall. The Prime Minister got into the water, embraced the old man—who seemed terrified at all the attention—took off his waistcoat, and made the old man wear it.

We also went to the flood-affected areas of Pind Dadan Khan. Nawaz Sharif told the pilot to land, but there was nothing but a flat bridge to land on. However, the pilot made a safe landing, and we got out of the helicopter to find that there was no one around. We walked a few hundred yards when we saw a tonga approaching, a very weak mare pulling the buggy along. We scrambled onto the tonga. Nawaz Sharif and I sat in front with the tongawala and the rest of the group sat in the rear. Unable to bear the weight of the rear passengers, the mare was lifted clean off the ground; her front feet dangled in the air. 'My mare is dying!' the tongawala shouted. We shifted all the weight to the front and the mare was lowered back to ground. Moments later, the mare's front legs were again in the air. Seeing that the tongawala was about to use his whip to get us off his tonga, the PM told me to give the man some money. I pulled out Rs 300 and the tongawala grabbed it from my hand. Nawaz Sharif told me to give him more. 'Give him Rs 3,000.' I handed over the money to the man. He thought I was buying his tonga.

The Thakot area of Hazara was also affected by the floods. As we were flying over the Karakoram Highway on our way to Thakot, we saw a long line of trucks, buses and wagons parked for over two miles due to a landslide. The PM ordered the pilot to land. As at the previous site, there was no flat area to land. The pilot took the helicopter down into a deep *nullah* and landed on

a sand bank. It felt as if we were falling down a chimney. We clambered up from the *nullah* bed onto the road on all fours.

Nawaz Sharif would undertake and pledge personal involvement in all kinds of projects: from putting checks on ghost schools and monitoring road construction, to levelling state lands and handing WAPDA over to the army. Once, after coming across an opponent—(one of many)—of the motorway project, the Prime Minister turned to me and asked: 'Did the Field Marshal face as much difficulty when he was shifting the capital from Karachi to Islamabad?'

Nawaz Sharif really did want to be another Sher Shah Suri who would have all his projects done—from start to finish—within five years. Nawaz Sharif would say that Sher Shah was lucky that he did not have Sartaj Aziz around to make so many objections to each of his proposals and highlight the financial constraints every time. The truth is that, despite being from a family of industrialists, Nawaz Sharif did not show much concern about finances.

In public appearances, Nawaz Sharif would sometimes appear to be very calm and at other times extremely nervous. The press photographers loved to catch Nawaz Sharif in moments when he was holding his head, wiping his sweat from his forehead, or putting his handkerchief over his eyes. I would tell him to avoid photographers in those situations, but the press invariably caught him in poses that conveyed his discomfort. In fact, he was hardly ever relaxed; even at large meetings like those of SAARC and the Commonwealth, he would attend the formal proceedings but seldom participate in the retreats where the prime ministers, presidents or heads of delegations would meet in a relaxed atmosphere.

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In October 1992, the Pakistanis in Canada invited me for a visit where I met the Speaker of the Canadian Parliament, Mr Fraiser,

and was introduced to the procedures and conduct of business in their parliament. Upon my return, I pressed for something like the Canadian Parliament TV channel to be started in Pakistan, which would show the peoples' representatives serving their electorate and nation. India and Bangladesh also had started to show their parliament proceedings on television. Our government, on the other hand, felt that the opposition would be the biggest beneficiary of the television, so the proposal was being stonewalled. Mr Frasier hinted that they would be willing to contribute approximately one million Canadian dollars for the channel. However, our ministry of information was not even prepared to consider the proposal.

It was during the 1993 Benazir government that the national assembly sessions were aired on television in a programme called 'Question Hour'. It was telecast at about 11 p.m., and sometimes even as late as midnight, but many people would stay awake to watch it.

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When Benazir was Prime Minister, she would decide which of the parliamentarians would go abroad on visits. When I was Speaker, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif gave me a free hand to run the National Assembly, and I would select the delegates and send my list to the Prime Minister. He would always approve the list—which I tried to make as representative as possible of all parties in the House.

The standing committees of various ministries were given extraordinary powers and the chairperson could potentially be as effective as a minister. The committees were given backup staff and even a car was provided for the chairperson's use. However, the PM's choice of chairperson was quite weak; hence the committees (barring a few) did not make a mark. The committee members were also restricted by the party line and would always be careful not to offend the PM so as to protect their positions.

Some committees hardly met and had to be pushed for meetings.

The National Assembly library was used by only 3.5 per cent of all MNAs—and that too, mostly for newspapers and magazines. A research department was established in the library but, as it turned out, the staff would prepare papers on various subjects and leave just the conclusion to be written by the member. (It should be noted though that the books required for debates, research, or study were in English, whereas our members mostly looked for material in Urdu.) I tried to link up the National Assembly library with the Library of Congress and those of other parliaments, but it never materialized.

The accommodation for MNAs was pathetic. The rooms were run down, with no separate area to work in, nor was there any place to entertain guests or the various people of the constituency who would come to discuss their problems. A committee was constituted to plan lodges for the parliamentarians. We decided on a simple design and obtained funds from the government. The lodges were to cost Rs 700 million. When the PPP government came in, they decided to change the design of the lodges and made them more elaborate and expensive. The cost escalated to Rs 1,250 million.

The staff of the National Assembly came to work from all over Islamabad, and transport was a problem. I bought two buses for them, which not only helped them out but also made things more efficient. When I became the Speaker, many ministers and MNAs asked me to make changes in the staff because the staff persons had been hired by the PPP. I did not listen to these requests, and instead called a meeting of the staff and assured them that nobody would be fired or transferred on the condition that they worked hard and with honesty and commitment. Things went smoothly from there on, and everyone cooperated with each other and gave me excellent results.



As an opposition leader, Benazir, barring a few fiery speeches, would simply come into the hall and take her appointed seat. She would slide lower and lower into her chair as the session progressed, fingering her colourful prayer beads and staring at the ceiling. It seemed to me that she was always reciting some *wazifa* or other given to her by some *pir*.

Once Mian Mohammad Zaman was speaking on Kashmir and said that India thinks Kashmir is her 'Atut Ang' (a part that is indispensable). Nusrat Bhutto, who had been arguing with him just a little while earlier, sprang to her feet and raised a point of order. 'What is your point of order, Begum Sahiba?' I asked. 'Mr Speaker, he just said '*Mai tang tor doonga*' [I will break your legs].' Mian Zaman blinked in surprise, and denied having said anything of the sort. 'Yes he did, Speaker Sahib!' Mrs Bhutto insisted. 'He should take back his words!'

I tried to pacify the Begum. After all, her Urdu was not too great; hence the misunderstanding.

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The government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was supporting the Americans and their coalition against Saddam Hussain, but the religious parties and the Chief of Army Staff, General Mirza Aslam Beg, fully supported Saddam. The religious parties were pasting posters of Saddam on walls and on trucks, and General Mirza Aslam Beg called a meeting at Kharian cantonment to brief senior officers about the imminent defeat of the Americans. A major general had prepared all the slides and charts of Saddam's expected victory but had to change all of them during the night to show an American victory.

Pakistan had about 12,000 troops in Saudi Arabia when the war in Iraq began, but General Mirza Aslam Beg did not allow them to be deployed in Iraq. The Saudis have not forgotten this decision. Egypt, on the other hand, sent 5000 troops to Iraq, in

return for which the Americans wrote off their \$15 billion debt.

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The Inter Parliamentary Union conference was held in Cameroon in mid-October 1992. Our delegation had to first pass through Lagos, Nigeria, and we were travelling on some airline that was unheard of. One of the MNAs in the delegation, Mr Yousaf Raza Gillani, upon arrival in Yoounde, discovered that his suitcase had been opened and that all of his expensive suits, shirts, and socks had been stolen and replaced with rags. Poor Mr Gillani was highly distressed.

On our way back from Cameroon, we again had to fly through Lagos. This time, we were shocked to discover, the Nigerian staff had given away our confirmed seats to other people for just a small sum of money. I was later told that in Nigeria it is customary to tip everyone; and the strange thing: the rate was 10 nyra for all, from the high and mighty down to the porter.

I was amazed by some of the places I visited during my time as Speaker. I remember, for instance, when we took a delegation to China in April 1991, where the Chinese Speaker hosted a banquet for us in the Great Hall of the People. My eyes were mesmerized by the cut glass, gold cutlery and highly expensive china laid out before us. It made me think of what things may have been like during the reign of the Chinese emperors.

In September 1991, the Sri Lankan Speaker, Mr Mohammad, (who was a leading Muslim scholar and a great elocutionist), invited me to witness the proceedings of the House. I accepted the invitation. When I arrived at the Sri Lankan parliament building, it took me a few moments to take in my surroundings. The location was stunning, surrounded by water on all sides, and the architecture too was highly impressive.

I also remember my trip to Hungary, where I took a parliamentary delegation at the end of January 1992. The sight

of members reading newspapers and magazines in the Assembly Hall struck me as very odd. When I asked the Speaker about it, he replied by saying that members must be fully informed while in the House. The Hungarian parliament building too was a beautiful structure. It must have been built with painstaking effort, especially its large stained-glass windows. When the Second World War began, they had those windows removed and stored in the basement to save them from the intense bombing by the Germans.

I also found the Nepalese parliament building very impressive—I visited it when the SAARC Speakers' conference was being held in Kathmandu in May 1992. The building had been the palace of the Ranas. Standing in the parliament hall, we looked up to find the entire area painted with scenes from tiger hunts. I asked the Nepalese speaker, Mr Ranabhat, if these paintings were in keeping with the essence of a parliament. He replied that the hall we were standing in had been the *naachkhana* [dance hall] of the Ranas.

On the streets of Kathmandu I noticed quite a number of girls wearing *shalwar kameez*. I asked our High Commissioner if these girls were Muslim, and he said that they were probably Hindu or Buddhist, but they were wearing *shalwar kameez* because they avidly watched Pakistani television dramas which were shown on Nepalese TV. We were told that the Muslims were a small minority in Nepal, most of whom had fled from India in 1857. They formed an economically depressed class, so they were generally looked down upon. However, when Father paid a state visit to Nepal, they saw a tall, broad and handsome Muslim leader and changed their views about the Muslims.

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The ASEAN countries had invited my wife and I for a function at the Indonesian embassy in Islamabad on 25 October 1991. The evening began with short performances from each country. The

group from the Philippines performed a dance called 'Tinkling'. The rhythm was catchy and the nimbleness of the performers drew repeated applause. At the end, the team leader came down from the stage and took hold of my hand, urging me onto the stage. Having no choice, I got up on stage, stood between the two performers (who were each holding two bamboo poles), and tried to imitate what I had seen the performers do. Naturally, this elicited much laughter from the guests. One of the performers tried again to show me how it was done. Cameras were clicking away all this time.

The next morning the *Frontier Post* had a large photo of me with the lady who was standing a good six feet away from me. The picture did not pan down to show the bamboos. As expected, the *mullahs* used it to raise a hue-and-cry about how un-Islamic the Speaker's behaviour had been. The *mullahs* did not realize that this dance is performed by Muslims in Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Even educated people can take things to a ridiculous level. I found it incredible that after this incident a lawyer from Karachi sent a letter to the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, requesting for it to be sent to the election commissioner so that I may be disqualified as a member of the National Assembly. The Deputy Speaker did not comply, so the lawyer took the matter to the Karachi High Court, and I had to seek the help of a lawyer to defend myself. The case was eventually dismissed.

A few weeks later at a wedding, I saw a family friend whom I had not seen for years. As she approached me, I said to her jokingly, 'Please do not come close to me. I recently had to fight a case in the High Court, Karachi because there was a lady standing six feet in front of me. You are now even closer than six feet, and I may well end up in the Supreme Court!'

The press photographers did not make matters easier. They would deliberately publish photos of members shaking hands with ladies, simply to create a scandal. I find it ridiculous; after

all, even in some Pakhtun tribes, don't women shake hands with their male relatives?

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There is no doubt in my mind that the debates in the Senate are more meaningful than those that take place in the National Assembly. Debates in the Senate are conducted in a less hostile atmosphere which allows for serious discussion on pertinent issues. The reason is that senators are not as embroiled in party politics and representation of their constituency as MNAs. No politician who has been nursing a constituency opts for the Senate. Even ministers who are senators are at times snubbed by MNAs when they speak, as they are deemed to be 'out of touch' with the people.

Debates in the National Assembly, on the other hand, are highly charged and the source of much petty conflict. For instance, Iftikhar Gilani (an MNA of the PPP), delivered a hard-hitting speech in the National Assembly in early March 1991. There was mention of the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court in his speech, but nothing in the content was such that it needed to be expunged. A few weeks later, the secretary of the National Assembly received a letter from the Supreme Court asking for the speech Mr Gilani had delivered. I refused permission to send the material to the Chief Justice, as I was of the opinion that Mr Gilani had not transgressed the rules of procedure and conduct of business in the National Assembly.

In a similar instance, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif once asked for the tape recording of Mr Aitzaz Ahsan's speech, in which Mr Aitzaz Ahsan had torn his policy to shreds on the assembly floor. I did not allow the tape to be sent to the Prime Minister, as, under the rules, the recording was to be released only upon the request of the member who had made the speech.

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When Nawaz Sharif was the Chief Minister of Punjab, he had realized that for him to get to the office of the Prime Minister he desperately needed the backing of Punjab. He used state funds to garner this support; plots and favours were bestowed lavishly, projects and development funds for Punjab were announced and immediately implemented.

In 1990, Nawaz Sharif was invited as the chief guest at a function to commemorate the death anniversary of Jalal Baba, a Muslim League leader from Abbottabad. About three hundred chairs had been laid out in the Jinnah Park and people had been informed by invitation. No public announcements had been made, nor were people transported to the meeting place, as they are at a political event. Even then a crowd of almost 15,000 people gathered to hear Nawaz Sharif speak. It was an indication that he had gained acceptability even in the NWFP.

During his first term as Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif allocated funds for MNAs, senators and MPAs to carry out development work in their respective areas. These government representatives put up marble plaques announcing the work they were doing. The Prime Minister disapproved of this, as he believed that all such development work should have been credited to him alone. Consequently, he ordered the removal of all such plaques and stated that in the future the schemes should bear his name foremost and then mention other names.

During his second term as Prime Minister, he strongly felt that those elected on the Muslim League ticket owed it entirely to him. I believe that he was even advised by his father and another gentleman close to his father that there was no need for him to form a cabinet. According to them, ministers were blackmailers; instead of involving them, he should single-handedly carry out the task of governance with advice from the cabal in Lahore.

During the month of Ramadan, it is customary for the Joint Chief and three service Chiefs to host *iftar* parties for the President and Prime Minister. At these parties, the strained relationship between President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif became all the more apparent. For the *maghrib* prayers, the two of them would stand in the front row but not shoulder to shoulder, as they were meant to be. I would have to stand between them to fill the gap.

Another instance of this tension was seen at the funeral of late Mr Junejo. The Prime Minister travelled to Sindhri (where the funeral was to be held) from Lahore with ministers and friends of Mr Junejo. I was in Islamabad so I went with the President in his Boeing 707. Throughout the funeral, they sat distinctly apart with their respective groups. It had not escaped the Prime Minister's notice that I had travelled with the President, as I discovered later.

### **Dissolution of the National Assembly**

When I went to attend the Inter Parliamentary Union meeting in New Delhi on 13 April 1993, I knew that by the time I returned, the assembly would be dissolved and the government dismissed. Before leaving for Delhi, I had taken home all the papers which I could possibly require to fight a court case.

In New Delhi, there was great interest in the Pakistani delegation. My speech as the leader of the delegation had been prepared by the National Assembly, but in that environment I found it too soft, so I amended it significantly. My presentation stung the Indians but drew applause from the delegates. The President of the IPU complimented me, as did the speakers of other countries, especially the Muslims. A unanimous resolution praising my speech in New Delhi was passed by the AJK Legislative Assembly a few weeks later and a copy of the resolution sent to me.

When I landed at the Lahore airport upon my return from New Delhi, everyone was waiting for the Prime Minister to address the nation. He had chosen to speak from Lahore for he feared that he might be stopped from going on air from Islamabad. His speech was hard-hitting and defiant.

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At about 10 p.m. on 18 April 1993, the National Assembly was dissolved under Article 58(2)(b). I was sitting in my TV room with legal council, Mr Akram Sheikh, and other staff of the National Assembly, when the news was announced. We responded immediately by writing a petition to challenge the dissolution. By 11:30 p.m. we were racing to get the petition to a High Court judge who lived near Ayub Park, Rawalpindi. From there I went to the PM House and told Nawaz Sharif about the petition. He looked shaken, and was pleased to see me.

While we had been preparing the petition, the sergeant-at-arms called to say that a senior army officer wanted the keys of the National Assembly. I told him that there was no martial law and the keys were not to be handed over to anyone. When I went to the National Assembly the next morning, there was a machine gun positioned between the gates. I stopped my car and called out to a captain standing by the gate: 'This is not martial law! Remove the machine gun from here!' The captain refused, saying he was simply following orders. I then made my way to the Army Chief, General Kakar, who said (very cordially) that he would have the machine gun removed at night. 'It will not be there tomorrow,' he promised. 'But do not mention this to the press.' I told the General that I was more interested in the removal of the machine gun rather than in giving press statements. The General kept his word; the morning after, the machine gun and the soldiers were gone.

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The petition for restoration of the parliament was to be heard in the Lahore High Court. On the first day, the courtroom was jam-packed. Mr J.A. Salik, a former minority MNA who had come to oppose the restoration, was sitting by himself. The petition was allowed to remain dormant as it would have been a long process. A fresh writ was moved directly in the Supreme Court, where it was taken up by the full Bench. On 26 May 1993, after nearly two weeks of hearings, the Supreme Court restored the National Assembly and the PML government. Upon receiving the verdict, I rushed to Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain's residence in Islamabad, where all party members had gathered. Everyone embraced and congratulated one other.

According to the rules, the Speaker can summon the assembly provided that he receives the signatures of 25 per cent of the members of the Assembly (which meant 54 signatures in this case). We quickly set about gathering these signatures. The National Assembly was summoned, and some of our MNAs who had gone over to the President's side returned. However, there were also some who tried to stay out of the picture. One PML member who was staying at a hotel very close to the National Assembly building did not come to the assembly on the pretext that his car was out of order. I told him that he could have reached there in time even if he had crawled.

Nawaz Sharif really should have taken to task the 44 members of the PML who had sent their resignations to the President at a time when they should have been standing by the party. He should not have given them party tickets to contest the general elections of 1993. But they were allowed to get away with their deeds.

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I had the Supreme Court's Short Order printed on plates and distributed to all the justices of the High Courts, Supreme Court and the AJK court. A plaque was also put up in the National

Assembly with this short order enshrined on it. *Chamak* and *lafafa* were the words used by the opposition to describe the order. The Assembly of a Sindhi (i.e. Benazir) would not be restored, they complained, whereas that of a Punjabi had been restored without a problem.

The assembly went on to pass the budget, but tensions had not eased between the President and the Prime Minister. The President still had some tricks up his sleeve. But, as it turned out, the President did not have opportunity to present his tricks; on 26 July 1993, the Army Chief asked both the Prime Minister and the President to resign.

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I was in my chamber in the National Assembly when Ijazul Haq called me up and told me that he and other members wanted to move a vote of no confidence against the PM, so that the PM would not be in a position to dissolve the National Assembly. I was going to advise against it, but he was not interested in listening to me and asked what my programme was for the day. I told him my plans, which included lunch with the Prime Minister at 1:30 p.m. He told me to wait for him before I left for the PM House—he wanted to come along. I waited for him, but he did not come. When he did show up finally, nothing was said about the dissolution of the assembly or about a vote of no-confidence. Ijazul Haq's cellphone was tapped and he had been told by the agencies to fall in line.

At about midnight that night, Nawaz Sharif and I left for the Aiwan-e-Sadar. The Army Chief and 10 Corps commander were already there. We were made to sit in the President's office, where the President was also present. The constitution required that the Prime Minister give his resignation to the President, which he did. Just then, Moin Qureshi stepped into the room and sat down. The President appointed him the caretaker Prime Minister and then signed his own letter of resignation which was

addressed to the Speaker of the National Assembly. I testified to his resignation and ordered its notification.

I imagine that this whole affair must have been distasteful for both the Prime Minister and the President, but they cannot be absolved of their hand in the events that led up to it. Had Nawaz Sharif resigned after delivering his speech against the President on 17 April 1993, he would have found himself in an invincible position. He resigned at a point when his resignation gave him no political capital. By then, the pattern of politics in Pakistan had become a musical chairs type scenario. The voters were convinced that Nawaz Sharif had not been removed only to be brought back three months later under some deal or other. The cooperative scandal, the increasing power of the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), and the absence of the original IJI, cost the Muslim League a significant number of votes, particularly in Punjab. The 1993 elections gave the PML and the ANP together only seventy-four seats in the National Assembly.

The caretaker Prime Minister, Moin Qureshi, had been possibly recommended by Sartaj Aziz. Soon Nawaz Sharif and others found that Moin Qureshi was eyeing the presidency. He realized that Nawaz Sharif would not be able to come back to power and his own popularity depended on how much he could damage Nawaz Sharif's image. After the elections that followed, he tried to enter the race for the presidency but did not manage to garner much support. The Muslim League was prepared to sit in the opposition but was still trying to get a person of their choice elected as President. Wasim Sajjad, who had been Acting President during the elections, came very close to becoming President as he was supported both by the PML and the PPP and recommended by the ISI. In the end, however, strife between the two parties prevented him from being chosen.

# 21

## SITTING IN OPPOSITION: 1993-1996

AFTER MOIN QURESHI was sworn in as the caretaker Prime Minister on 18 July 1993, all directly elected members left for their constituencies to prepare for the general elections. Constitutionally, the Speaker continues to hold office till the new assembly is elected and a new Speaker is sworn in, but I had no work in the National Assembly after its dissolution, so I too left for Haripur to do my campaigning.

Campaigning started with tremendous gusto. Both the Muslim League and the PPP were evenly balanced and both leaders had public appeal. Everywhere there were flags, posters, and announcements of public rallies. Nawaz Sharif even got hold of an MI-17 Russian helicopter which enabled him to address nearly six large public gatherings spread in different parts of the country in a day. The thrust of his speeches was mainly anti Benazir talk. He spoke not about what the Muslim League could do, but rather what he would do. He mobilised the business community to come to his aid and he had more than sufficient finances to sustain his long and aggressive campaign. He took a few men as sloganeers everywhere he went; they would get on stage and charge the crowd with their energy and their chanting. Without that, the meetings would not have had the same charged effect that they did.

On polling day it seemed that the PML would surely win, at least in the cities. Till midnight, the results coming in indicated a PML victory, but these results were from the urban areas where

the PPP was expected to trail. The PPP won in the rural areas and so won the elections, albeit with a simple majority.

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After the elections, Nawaz Sharif came to my residence along with some former ministers to propose that I again contest the election for Speaker. I told him that it would not be possible to break through the PPP stronghold in the assembly. They were insistent, however, and I decided to finally go along with their request. I did not want to appear to be backing out in the face of defeat.

In 1990, the PML had a two-third majority in a house of 217. In October 1993, the picture was starkly different: the PML had 72 members and 2 from the ANP. My defeat was certain. Yet, not contesting would have implied that I was not prepared to take the risk. I told Nawaz Sharif that even if I was voted in as Speaker, Benazir would within days move the House for my removal and succeed with a simple majority.

Sheikh Rashid Ahmad and Dr Basharat Jazbi helped me with the canvassing. Nawaz Sharif, Shahbaz Sharif, and Saif-ur-Rehman also put in their best to strengthen my position; they felt that my victory would open up the possibility of Nawaz Sharif procuring a majority in the House. Their hopes were rather unrealistic, though, as was confirmed to me by some senior politicians who pledged their votes for me but plainly said these votes were not transferable to Nawaz Sharif.

Under the constitution, the incumbent Speaker presides over the election for the new one. Benazir objected to this since I was a candidate, so I agreed to let Mehmood Khan Achakzai preside. (Mehmood Khan decided, at the last minute, to revoke his pledge to vote for me to show neutrality.) Benazir was on tenterhooks while the voting was taking place. I polled 92 votes, and the other candidate, Syed Makhdoom Yousaf Raza Gilani, 106. In the polls

for Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif won 72 votes. We were now the Opposition.

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Ijazul Haq was keen on being appointed the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Nawaz Khokhar advised Nawaz Sharif against it, insisting that Ijazul Haq would not be able to face Benazir and her ministers. Khokhar suggested that I be appointed Deputy Leader instead. Nawaz Sharif accepted the suggestion and offered me the position. This was a job that suited my liking, and I took to it like a duck to water. For nearly two years, Nawaz Sharif hardly came to the National Assembly, which gave me the opportunity to lead the opposition and keep the PPP on its toes in the House.

Within six weeks of the members being sworn in, I moved a requisition to the Speaker to summon the National Assembly. We had seventy-four members in the opposition and only fifty-four signatures were required to requisition the Assembly. To overcome the problem of obtaining signatures, I had six requisitions ready and signed and only needed to put in the objective of the requisition and a date. The PPP was taken aback at a requisition being moved so early in the game.

Benazir wanted to avoid attending the requisition session. She kept her members in the committee room so that there would be a lack of quorum and the Speaker would adjourn the House. The opposition had to wait nearly an hour before we reached the count of fifty-four, despite the fact that every member had been told to come. Some wanted to play it safe and had indicated to the PPP beforehand that they would attend the session but slip away if voting took place.

The Speaker entered and the session began. After the *tilawat*, Benazir led her members into the House and was greeted by cries of 'shame shame'. Contrary to her expectations, we had been able to muster a quorum and the session did take place. It was really

just a show that even a small opposition can dictate its points in the House.

The presidential elections brought a burst of activity to Islamabad. The candidates in the running were many: Wasim Sajjad, Sartaj Aziz, Majeed Malik, Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari from the PPP, and me. Due to the ISI's efforts, both Benazir and Nawaz Sharif accepted Wasim Sajjad as a consensus candidate. The agreement between the PPP and the PML even appeared in the press. Benazir backed out of the agreement at the last moment, not wanting to be seen as influenced by the ISI. Nawaz Sharif stuck with his nomination of Wasim Sajjad (now as a PML candidate) for President.

Wasim Sajjad's campaign never really got off the ground. I was in Murree when I received a call from Nawaz Sharif to come right away to Chaudhry Shujaat's residence. On reaching Shujaat's house, I found Nawaz Sharif huddled together with top PML leaders, many of whom had been former ministers. Wasim Sajjad would not make it, they said. We were losing votes by the minute. Nawaz Sharif suggested that we request Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan to be our candidate. We tracked the Nawabzada down in Maulana Fazlur Rahman's house, and Nawaz Sharif broached the subject with them. After hearing him out, both the Nawabzada and Maulana Fazlur Rahman started to laugh. 'You want me to face the humiliation of your defeat?' the Nawabzada said. 'Thank you, but no thank you.'

And so we had no option but to await the election results. We were beaten badly and it served us right.

A similar situation developed during the run-up to the election of the chairman of the Senate. Nawaz Sharif wanted to nominate Mir Afzal Khan of Mardan as his candidate. The latter was in touch with Benazir; he had been a minister in Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's government. Mir Afzal Khan wanted to be a consensus candidate but it seemed that Benazir did not entirely trust him because he had frequently shifted his loyalties. Mir Afzal Khan

was a businessman; he considered it essential for him to be in everyone's good books.

I was of the opinion that Wasim Sajjad was our only candidate; Mir Afzal Khan was not going to stand with us. Nawaz Sharif was unwilling to support Wasim, so Wasim did not get the kind of support from the PML that he should have received. It was his own influence with the senators which rendered him victorious, or perhaps they may have wanted to compensate him for his earlier defeat.

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Under the 'Salary, Allowances and Privileges of the Prime Minister' (specified under the National Assembly Secretariat, Islamabad Act No. LIX of 1975), the Prime Minister was allowed one duty free car (per tenure) which did not exceed Rs400,000. The first thing Benazir did upon entering her second term as Prime Minister was to order a Mercedes S600L for herself (in addition to the Mercedes 500 she had acquired in her first term). The Shipping Company in Germany naturally overjoyed, printed Benazir's picture in its brochure of the car, along with the caption: 'beauty for a beautiful lady: a mercedes for a prime minister'. And all this was coming from a Prime Minister who so eagerly claimed to sympathize with the poor!

I raised the Mercedes issue both inside and outside the National Assembly. Benazir had a privilege motion moved against me, accusing me of having fabricated the Shipping Company brochures, and then dropped the motion. She was eventually forced to return both the cars to the government to avoid charges being framed against her.

Not one to take such things lying down, Benazir rounded up all the Mercedes cars which Nawaz Sharif had purchased as Prime Minister to show that he had used state money for his personal use. True enough, no other President or Prime Minister had had a sports car in their fleet. As a result of this issue, the



PPP government found the justification for initiating inquiries on the Sharif family's various private projects, for which he drew flack both nationally and internationally.

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The Speaker of the Iranian Majlis, Natic Noori came to Pakistan on 9 April 1994, and addressed a session of the National Assembly on 11 April. The Benazir government did not give the Speaker a guard of honour nor did they give him the status or protocol that Mehdi Karoubi, a former Speaker of the Iranian Majlis, had been given by me. In fact, there had been no plan for him to address the National Assembly; only after strong protest from the Iranian Ambassador was Natic Noori invited to speak. One of the reasons for not wanting Mr Noori to address the Assembly was that they did not want Nawaz Sharif to be given any opportunity to make a speech or even an appearance; the event was to be telecast live. The Iranians left dissatisfied with their visit.

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A friend of Miangul Aurangzeb had written to him from England telling him that Benazir and Asif Zardari were soon to be his neighbours; the couple had been examining Rockwood Manor, an extensive property close to his farm. The initial impression had been that they were only looking for property but then some British newspapers reported that they in fact owned the mansion. Ijaz Shafi (an MNA) bought forty copies of the newspaper and had them sent to Pakistan. The paper had half page colour spreads of Rockwood Manor. Our plan was that all opposition members would hold the newspaper with the photo turned towards the Speaker and remain standing throughout the session. When Benazir entered the hall, she was surprised to see all the

opposition members standing with newspapers in their hands. 'What are you holding up?' she asked, walking towards me.

'Your property in England,' I replied. 'It looks good!'

She went to her chair and sat down. The government members went numb. They were all aware that this issue would spell big trouble for them. When Benazir got up to defend herself, she seemed dazed. She tried to transfer the blame to the Opposition by accusing us of having paid the English newspaper to publish the photo and the article on Rockwood Manor.

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Farooq Leghari had been the Leader of the Opposition between 1990 and 1993. He was a staunch supporter of Benazir. When Benazir dropped Wasim Sajjad as consensus candidate, she replaced him with Farooq Leghari—not least because Leghari's mother was a Pakhtun. Benazir rightly predicted that the Pakhtun members of the NWFP, Balochistan and FATA would vote for him across party lines. To keep alive our chances of winning, the PML should also have gotten a Pakhtun in the running. However, the predictable happened: Farooq Leghari was elected President.

President Farooq Leghari was due to address the joint session on 14 November 1994, and the Opposition decided to disrupt his speech. The plan was that the Opposition would go into the National Assembly hall long before the treasury bench members arrived, and take all the front seats to the left of the Speaker. (Normally, members of the National Assembly and the Senate sit in the alphabetical order of their names). This way we could be a compact block and our protest would be more effective.

Benazir had asked me earlier as to what we (the Opposition) would do during the President's speech. I assured her that she would come to no harm. She continued to harbour suspicions, however, and had Mian Mohammad Sharif (Nawaz Sharif's father) arrested in Lahore a few days before the speech on

purported tax evasion charges. Mian Sharif was dragged down to a waiting car, taken to a 'safe house' (such houses are generally used by intelligence agencies) and then brought to Islamabad and lodged in a house close to that of Lieutenant General Majid Malik. I asked Benazir why she had arrested an old man, to which she replied that if the Opposition was going to disrupt her President, she was going to even the score.

We tried to see Mian Sharif at the house where he was being kept, but we were turned back from the gate. Having no choice, we left his heart medication with the security personnel at the gate. On 19 November 1994, Mian Sharif had to be rushed to the hospital (PIMS), and rumours began to circulate that he was dead. I rushed to the PIMS and barged into his cell in the intensive care unit. He was ill, but certainly not dead. The PPP feared a countrywide backlash in the event that he died in their custody. The possibility itself was enough to scare them, so they released Mian Sharif soon after the incident.

In a meeting held in the Muslim League House in Islamabad, it was finally decided not to let the President go scot-free. Again deliberations began on how to disrupt the President's speech. Some felt that disruption of his speech was not enough. Anger among PML members was high. Debates continued all through the evening uptil midnight. Some were so agitated that they seemed capable of starting fist fights in the Assembly, which would surely have been the equivalent of shooting ourselves in the foot. Fortunately, everyone settled on the initial plan to disrupt the President's speech and no more.

When the time of the session arrived, we went into the Assembly hall and took all the seats in the front row to the left of the Speaker. When the PPP and their allied parties came in, a row began and Ms Tehmina Daultana threw her *dupatta* at the President when he was addressing the House. The PPP members made a protective circle round Benazir to show their loyalty to her. Of course we had no plans to touch Benazir—I myself had conveyed this to her. The shouting was deafening, and not a word

of the President's speech could be understood. (The President had decided to go ahead with his speech despite the racket). It was a chaotic session, if I've ever seen one.

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In a working committee meeting, Ahmad Raza Kasuri was assigned the task of inventing ways to destabilise the PPP government. As per his suggestions, Nawaz Sharif should lead a long march from Multan to Islamabad in which his motorcade would grow and eventually block the traffic on the GT road. A similar march should be led by me from Dera Ismail Khan to Bannu, Kohat and Peshawar and then Islamabad. On this Nawaz Sharif said what if Gohar Sahib reaches Islamabad and sends me a message not to come any further. We all laughed. To put pressure on the government we decided to go ahead with the train march we had planned from Karachi to Peshawar.

The train march was a success as far as the mobilisation of the party's office-bearers and workers was concerned. The train march would have been more effective if it had had the ripple effect we had hoped for. When the train would leave the station after Nawaz Sharif made his short speech, the audience on the platform would disperse. Had the party leaders and workers continued their protests in every town even after the train had left, the impact would have been much greater.

However, a few unfortunate events also occurred along the way: some workers fell off the roof of the train, others were arrested. It was even more unfortunate that these people were then neglected by Nawaz Sharif and each of them had to fight their court cases and pay their hospital bills on their own. Some cases stretched on for so long that they were still being heard when we returned to power for the second time.

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The PPP government used whatever means possible to discredit the opposition. Sheikh Rashid Ahmad was framed; the police produced an AK-47 rifle from under a sofa in the main public hall of his Lal Haveli. (The poor man was having to fight the case on his own, until finally Nawaz Sharif was persuaded with great difficulty to go to the Rawalpindi court to see him. He never once visited Sheikh Rashid while the latter was in jail.) Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain and Pervez Elahi were also arrested on trumped up charges and kept in Adiala jail. We would go to see them from time to time. Ijazul Haq, while delivering a speech in Rawalpindi, picked up an AK-47 rifle and raised it above his head, and said: 'I have an AK-47; come and arrest me! Who dares to arrest me?' When he was being arrested, he revealed that it was only a toy gun.

Meanwhile, the corruption charges against Benazir and Asif Ali Zardari had piled up to such an extent that Pakistan was quoted as the second most corrupt nation in the world. 'Mr 10 per cent' as Asif Zardari was known in their first term, now became 'Mr 100 per cent'. It became a common joke that in their room, husband and wife would ask each other how much the other had made that day. Hotels in Islamabad were busy catering to wheelers and dealers of all kinds. The British High Commissioner raised the issue of corruption when he met Benazir at the Prime Minister's House in mid-1996. Benazir apparently got up and left the room in anger.

I was given a list containing the names of the thirty-five opposition members who were to be arrested on various charges. I informed Nawaz Sharif and the rest of the members about the list, and we made it clear that we knew what was being planned. This stopped Benazir from ordering the mass arrests she had been planning. I was also given information about which rooms and tables in a leading hotel of Islamabad were bugged, as well as information about the tapping systems in Nawaz Sharif's rooms in Murree. (After that, Nawaz Sharif would visit spy shops in London and pick up counter-bugging equipment). Since we

all knew our telephones were bugged, we would use the phones to deliberately spread misinformation—and the agencies were only too happy to help.

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The relationship between Benazir and President Leghari was a double-sided one. On the one hand, Leghari continued to express his complete loyalty to her, and on the other hand he was clearly looking to do away with her government. It was becoming apparent that the PPP government would be removed—not through a vote of no-confidence—but by the President.

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During the first two years in the opposition, Nawaz Sharif hardly attended the National Assembly sessions. Perhaps he was fearful that he would be attacked by the PPP and that they would raise issues which would put him on the spot, especially issues that concerned his private dealings and business interests. (None of us except Ishaq Dar and Sartaj Aziz knew about these matters). Khurshid Shah, the Minister for Education and Hajj, told me that had I not been the deputy leader of the opposition, the PPP would have devastated Nawaz Sharif.

We put immense pressure on Benazir and her ministers throughout our time as the opposition; in fact, the assembly was totally in our hands. In order to have our questions be the first ones to be dealt with in the question hour, I would prepare the questions beforehand and rush down as soon as the assembly was adjourned *sine die* to the notice room, where these questions were to be presented, so that they would be listed as the first question to be answered during the next session. As a result, the question hour became a totally one-sided affair. Benazir often had an exasperated expression on her face during the National Assembly sessions. I must admit, however, that the PPP's quorum

was very difficult to break—and in this regard Khurshid Shah the Chief Whip did an excellent job of keeping Benazir's ministers on their toes and Benazir's control over her members.

It was only once, and that too late at night when the PPP members had left the hall, that I could draw the Speaker's attention to the lack of quorum. The Assembly was in session for the sake of adopting a minor bill which was of no real importance, but it did give me the opportunity to embarrass Benazir. I prolonged the discussion till 10:30 p.m. The PML members had been asked to stay on in the lobby though there would be no voting. The debate dragged on further till 11:15 p.m., and the number of PPP members had dropped. Now was the time to strike. I forced a division in the house and pushed for a vote. The Speaker was horrified. Some PML members who had promised Benazir not to participate in a vote were caught unaware. As required, the Speaker ordered a head count. We were two votes ahead of the government, but the Speaker did not declare the count and took another count half-an-hour later. I shouted at him, telling him he was violating the rules and should not be presiding. He finally announced the count which was the same as before; we had defeated the PPP by two votes. I knew that all this effort would hardly give us more than a fleeting victory, but still it was worth it when I saw the next day's papers carrying headlines of the government's defeat. The next day, the PPP turned up in full strength to reverse the defeat of the previous night.

I would always reach the National Assembly an hour before the start of the session and park my car in front of the main entrance for all to see. The PML would use this hour to discuss the day's agenda and how to hammer the PPP. Some of our members suspected that committee room #4, where we held our meetings, was bugged. I told them to forget about the bugging; for even if the room was bugged, it would take a number of days for the transcripts to be sent to the concerned people. And sure

enough, the PPP was never able to checkmate us on anything said in the committee room.

Out of seventy-four opposition members, about twelve or fifteen would be present for these one-hour preparations. Some members would come to the assembly whenever it took their fancy, look around the press gallery, request the Speaker for time to speak on the excuse that they had an important engagement to attend to, and then disappear after speaking. There was one member I recall in particular who had the habit of cutting in at every opportunity to appear in a photograph with Nawaz Sharif. He would somehow insert himself into the group, give the go-ahead signal to the photographers, and then hound them to have these photos published.

We asked Nawaz Sharif not to get up in protest or lead the attacks in the National Assembly. He would remain seated and leave it to me and other members to lead the onslaught. Most speeches by the PML members were rather generalized and did not bother the PPP. However, Khwaja Asif and Sheikh Rashid did well in their attacks on the PPP.

Nawaz Sharif started attending the assembly more frequently in 1996. Unfortunately, his forays in the assembly had a negative impact, if any. In the hour that we would use to prepare for the day's agenda, Nawaz Sharif wasted our time by repeatedly asking us what we should do to destabilise Benazir's government outside the Assembly. Bills which were detrimental to the public interest would be passed in seconds, sometimes six in one go, because the opposition members were held up by Nawaz Sharif in the committee room. Nawaz Sharif was not particularly concerned with our performance in the National Assembly. To everyone's surprise though, he did make some long and well-prepared speeches, but there was never a full-on debate between him and Benazir—something which would have been in keeping with the spirit of a parliamentary democracy.



In the National Assembly sessions, the PPP members did not ask questions, move adjournment motions, privilege motions, or rise on a point of order. They just reacted to the onslaught of the opposition under the instructions of Benazir.

Three PPP ministers were assigned to regularly attend the National Assembly sessions: Major General Naseerullah Babar, Dr N.D. Khan, and Dr Sher Afghan Niazi. I called them 'the three stooges' and targetted them relentlessly. I would often call General Babar a decorated soldier. In 1965, he had landed his helicopter amongst Indian troops believing they were Pakistanis. Had the general been made prisoner, we would have had many to replace him but, the helicopter could not have been replaced. I would taunt him by saying that the award he received was really for saving the helicopter. I would only say that to annoy him, though. He was in fact a brave officer and fully deserved the award.

N.D. Khan was nicknamed 'Nothing Doing Khan'. (He had an MBBS degree which I twisted into '*Mian Biwi Bacha Sath*' because he would take his entire family on tours with him). Dr Sher Afghan Niazi was 'Dungar Doctor' (veterinary doctor). Ghazanfar Gul had been appointed by Benazir to disrupt my remarks or speeches. However, he would get so worked up in the process that his eyes would roll and he would froth from the sides of his mouth and stammer. I remarked once, 'Mr Speaker, even if Mr Ghazanfar Gul throws his cap at the ceiling or comes into the House walking on his hands, you cannot call him insane. He can only be termed insane by a competent court, as is laid down in our constitution. So, Mr Speaker, we will have to tolerate him. The world is full of strange people.' Mr Ghazanfar was, expectedly, infuriated.

Benazir went by helicopter to Tanaka Baba (a *pir* near Mansehra) and came to the Assembly directly after the visit. I asked her if she had received a thrashing from Tanaka Baba. (Tanaka Baba had a few canes with which he would thrash people as a way of blessing them). She smiled and replied that

his blessings were sufficient for her government to stay on in office (conspicuously avoiding the part about the thrashing). 'No,' said I, 'knowing Tanaka Baba, who I know quite well in fact, he has given you a clear indication that your government is on its way out.'

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None of the past governments had initiated any hydro-electric power project after Tarbela (which Father had laid the foundation stone for in December 1968) as a result of which thermal power projects had become essential to meet the ever-increasing power demands in the country. Industries were forced to generate their own power at very high costs to avoid their operations from being constantly interrupted by power failures. Setting up private power projects was the right way to address the problem at the time but these plants should have been operated on gas, not on furnace oil. The number of power stations sanctioned was far in excess of our requirement. Over-invoicing was rampant and a few people made windfall profits. The issue was taken up in the National Assembly but, not surprisingly, nothing came of it since the top lot was involved, as were some bureaucrats.

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There was a big fire in the National Assembly causing extensive damage. The cause was short-circuiting. Enormous amounts were spent on the repairs. The assembly hall was redesigned to give it the look of a saint's shrine. Work was undertaken without tenders and over 400 staff-persons were recruited for no purpose except to employ supporters of the Speaker. While the repair work was being done, the assembly sessions were held in the State Bank building. The Capital Development Authority was ordered to erect engraved wooden pillars across the road from the parliament building. The pillars looked more like crucifixes.

I told the PPP ministers: 'You are preparing the spot for your own punishment.'

Odd monuments began to crop up at various crossings in Islamabad. Not only was this expenditure of millions of rupees completely unnecessary, but these monuments created traffic hazards and had to be removed. It is the officers who planned all the monstrosities that should have been held responsible, but the operation of these officers is such that they go underground for about one year and then resurface with the help of those in the government or otherwise, who require their wheeler-dealing skills. It is not only expenses for these small items but practically all projects that come under investigation or public notice through the press.

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On 26 October 1996, Nawaz Sharif was on his way from Murree to Islamabad when he called me and said: 'Drive towards Murree straight away. Where we cross each other, you will get into my car. I have something very important to discuss with you.' We met near Chappar, where I got into his car and his driver followed us in mine. Driving slowly, Nawaz Sharif told me what had just unfolded: the President had made contact with him through Shahid Hamid. He wanted to remove Benazir and was asking for Nawaz Sharif's support. After her removal, elections would be held within the stipulated period. Nawaz Sharif went on to tell me that Benazir had also made contact with him to suggest that they join hands to remove the President. A code of conduct would be negotiated between the two parties, she said, and political victimisation would stop. Nawaz Sharif told me to keep all this to myself. 'Only the two of us are in the loop,' I said to him. 'If I hear this information from anywhere else, I know it will be you who has spilled the beans. I know how to keep my word.'

Benazir's government was ousted on 5 November 1996 with the use of Article 58(2)(b). A number of technocrats began pressuring President Leghari to carry out a massive accountability exercise before holding elections so that both Benazir and Nawaz Sharif would be disqualified. The President stuck to the constitutional requirement and held the election within the stipulated period.

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The period of being in the opposition in Pakistan is always difficult. There is no such thing as a loyal opposition. The ruling party invariably tries to break the opposition, and exercises whatever means possible to do so. However, the Muslim League took up the challenge. And we were rewarded for it in the elections. The PML won 123 seats; more than even I—the optimist—had been expecting.

# 22

## AS FOREIGN MINISTER

ON 6 FEBRUARY 1997, we had a meeting in the Muslim League secretariat, Islamabad, with Nawaz Sharif as the chair. The PML had won a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly, and we were on top of the world. I had got a lead of 62,500 votes from NA-13; Nawaz Sharif had a lead of 42,000 from NA-12 in Hazara, double the lead he had from the two seats he contested from Lahore. Nawaz Sharif took me aside after the meeting and told me that he wanted to make me the foreign minister. I was not pleased to hear this, because as foreign minister I would have to spend a lot of my time out of the country and would not be able to devote time to my constituency, which would probably result in a defeat for me in the next elections. I asked Nawaz Sharif to let someone else have the post. He asked me to recommend some names in this regard, so I gave him two. He turned them down and repeated his desire to appoint me as foreign minister. It seems that he had made a few decisions before coming to Islamabad.

On 25 February 1997, I was asked to appear at the swearing-in ceremony of the ministers. Six ministers were sworn in, but their portfolios were not announced at the time. A minister close to the Prime Minister (PM) told Mr Saeed Mehdi, Principal Secretary to the PM, that he wanted to become foreign minister. The minister was told that someone else had already been appointed for the position, but the minister remained insistent. He even went to the PM directly, but nothing came of it. My appointment as foreign minister was officially announced at the

ceremony, but there were five aspirants who kept hoping they would have their way one day.

The immediate tasks before me on being appointed foreign minister were:

- To prepare for the OIC conference to celebrate the golden jubilee of Pakistan on 23 March 1997;
- Visit China to strengthen our bilateral relationship and take Beijing into confidence on issues which would be at the forefront in Pakistan's politics, such as the Kashmir problem and Afghanistan;
- Visit Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the Gulf countries to thank them for the financial support they had extended to Pakistan and Afghanistan;
- Attend the SAARC conference in Male, Maldives, in early May 1997 and take the opportunity to raise the Kashmir issue in that forum;
- Work for a peaceful settlement in Afghanistan and create a broad-based government to bring peace, which would open trade routes to Central Asia and activate the gas pipeline project from Turkmenistan to Pakistan. Also facilitate the return of three million Afghan refugees to their homes;
- Meet with the American Secretary of State (Madeleine Albright) for the resolution of our outstanding problems and for the withdrawal of sanctions imposed on Pakistan, the F-16 issue, nuclear non-proliferation, missiles, etc., and ask for her help in the resolution of the Kashmir problem.
- Send a secretary-level delegation to India by the end of March for opening of talks with India in New Delhi. (In his election campaign, the PM had pledged to normalise relations with India to move towards a resolution of the Kashmir dispute.)
- Visit Russia to strengthen the relationship with Moscow. Seek purchase of fighter aircraft and other equipment. Seek help to resolve the Kashmir problem. Put the Afghanistan war behind us.

- Visit Japan, as it was the largest single financial donor to Pakistan.
- Visit the Central Asian Republics to request their help in bringing peace to Afghanistan. Look into expanding trade and sale of Russian tank and fighter aircraft in those countries and purchase surplus military equipment from them. Also expedite the linkup with Tajikistan by building a road that connects them with the Karakoram Highway. Need for settling the Kashmir dispute;
- Cement ties with South Africa, as it could be a source of arms supply and upgrade, just as Israel is to India.

Most of the ambassadors and high commissioners had taken up their assignments in their respective countries of designation courtesy of the caretaker Prime Minister Malik Meraj Khalid. Amongst them was Air Vice Marshal (retd) Mushtaq A. Leghari, a relative of President Farooq Leghari, who was to proceed to the UAE as ambassador. Just before he was to leave, I informed the PM of his posting. The PM decided that he wanted to send someone else for the post and asked me to withhold the Air Vice Marshal's posting. I advised the PM against the move. 'He has served in the air force there and has good contacts with the Sheikh and Crown Prince Abdullah,' I told him. 'In any case, President Leghari will certainly take it badly. Do not spoil your relations with the President so soon.'

The PM paid heed to my advice, and the Air Vice Marshal did go to the UAE. The PM was never happy about it, and soon after I left the foreign ministry, Nawaz Sharif replaced the Air Vice Marshal with his confidant, Khayam Kaiser, as the ambassador to the UAE.

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The first task before me was to make arrangements for the golden jubilee celebrations of Pakistan's independence, during which the

special OIC conference was also to be held in Islamabad. Benazir Bhutto's government had gone to great lengths to host this conference despite the fact that the country's financial situation was dire and unable to support the expenses that the arrangements for the OIC conference would require. The convention centre, parliament building, various lodges and private homes were prepared to house the heads of states and governments and foreign ministers with their entourages. Special crockery, furniture, carpets, coaches were imported along with security equipment. Mercedes cars were donated by the Saudi government.

Nawaz Sharif was not interested in the golden jubilee nor in the OIC conference, and rightly so. He was asking people to donate to the government to improve the financial situation of the country, and here were precious funds being wasted on the golden jubilee celebrations. However, it was decided to go ahead with both functions according to the original plan before I took over the ministry.

Because of the considerable amount of work that needed to be done with regard to these events, I did not get sufficient time to carry special messages to heads of states and governments to invite them to attend the OIC conference. Despite this, Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, President Rafsanjani of Iran, President Suleman Demirel of Turkey, and a host of others were present. The armed forces were extremely helpful and made excellent arrangements for the guests, giving attention even to minor details. A control room was established in the foreign ministry to coordinate all activities of the golden jubilee and OIC conference. It was headed by the Additional Secretary, Riffat Mehdi, who did an excellent job. (I later sent him to Iran to advise the Iranians on organising the OIC conference in Tehran). The air force was also cooperative: the aircraft of the delegates could not be kept at the Islamabad airport due to lack of space, so they were allowed to park at airports in Peshawar, Lahore and Karachi. The shortage of big cars was compensated for by private



individuals who volunteered their cars for use by the VVIPs. So in the end, the golden jubilee and the OIC conference went off quite smoothly.

During the OIC conference there were whispered suggestions that the regular OIC session scheduled for 1998 should not be held in the Iranian capital as planned, as quite a number of countries did not want to go to Tehran for fear of invoking the displeasure of the Americans. This could have blown into a major crisis, but it was preempted by a meeting arranged between Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and President Rafsanjani of Iran.

The convention centre proved to be a total liability as did the parliamentary lodges, which had been specially furnished for the OIC foreign ministers. It would have been more feasible to have built a five star hotel with a conference hall and committee rooms. This is the trend in Europe and the US, and also in some Gulf states.

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In Nawaz Sharif's election campaign, he proposed to make attempts to stabilize relations with India. Being from the Punjab and with Kashmiri heritage, he was in a good position to garner support for his efforts in parliament and in the public. He made a statement that the foreign secretaries of the two countries would meet before the end of March 1997. A four-member delegation headed by the Foreign Secretary, Mr Shamshad Ahmad, was sent to Delhi. The talks were scheduled to be spread over four days, but on the third day the final day's session was called off because of political instability (internal to India). On the fourth day the Indian External Affairs Secretary, Salman Haider, requested a one-to-one meeting with Shamshad Ahmad who wisely took another officer with him. In the meeting the Indian External Affairs Secretary stated that they had received information that Kashmir would not be discussed by Pakistan.

Shamshad Ahmad reported this to me and I raised it with the PM who showed ignorance. I told him that we could not carry on negotiations if information was withheld from the foreign minister.

I went to New Delhi in early April to attend the Non Aligned Movement (NAM) conference. As Pakistan's foreign minister, the Indian media gave me extensive coverage. Using the publicity I received, I expressed the desire for a meeting of the two prime ministers to seek a resolution to the Kashmir dispute and to other differences between us. My interaction with the Indian Minister of External Affairs, Mr Inder Kumar Gujral, was very positive. Later, at a reception hosted by the Indian prime minister, I told Mr Gujral that I had gone through the Roll of Members of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan and found that a gentleman named Gujral had signed it on 10 August 1947. 'Who was this Mr Gujral?' I asked him.

'My father,' replied the minister. I embraced him and tears came to his eyes. I knew then that we would get along well.

After the NAM conference, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leaders met me at the Pakistan High Commissioner's residence in New Delhi. Each of them expressed their views on their party's stand on Kashmir and the overall situation. One of the Kashmiri leaders said to me, 'Minister Sahib, there is a difference between India and Pakistan.'

'That is obvious,' I said.

'Not in the manner you think it to be,' he said.

'Then in what manner?'

'In India, if the government sets out to take some measures it gets its peoples' support and all political parties and the armed forces back it wholeheartedly. They did this for the attack on East Pakistan, and they won the war. Practically all the world was opposing them except Bhutan, and yet they achieved their objective.'

I agreed with him. 'And in Pakistan?' I asked. 'East Pakistan became Bangladesh, Afghanistan is still in turmoil and Kashmir

continues to bleed. Pakistan takes half-hearted measures and has not brought any issue to fruition.'

Mr Gujral invited me to stay on after the NAM conference for talks. The talks were held in Hyderabad House over breakfast and our rapport developed further. I raised the issue of Kashmir and said it was the main irritant in our relations, the rest could be resolved even by lower level functionaries in a few days. Mr Gujral and I agreed to host the next round of meetings of our foreign secretaries in Islamabad. In the end, I said to him: 'Let me be the first to congratulate you in advance.' I was quite sure that he would be the next Indian Prime Minister after Mr Deve Gowda. My prediction was spot-on, and I am glad that I was the first one to congratulate him.

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When I became foreign minister, our balance of payments and reserve situation was far from satisfactory. President Farooq Khan Leghari was to go to China to obtain a one billion dollar loan to boost our reserves and I was to accompany him. The cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy at the time was strengthening ties with China. We left Islamabad on 29 April 1997 for Beijing, and met President Jiang Zemin and his financial team the same afternoon. The President thanked the Chinese leadership for consistently coming to Pakistan's help and reaffirmed that ours was a time-tested friendship. When President Leghari began discussing the possibility of sending back the thirteen Chinese youngsters who had crossed over the Shamshal Pass into Hunza, the Chinese president was all ears. (Thirteen Chinese nationals had come to Pakistan, claiming they were short of food. They had been arrested in Gilgit, released on bail, and since then they had been staying at a local madrassa.)

The Chinese president thanked us and said that he would have helped us with our request for loans, but that they had their own financial problems to resolve just then, which were mainly

concerned with the Asian Tigers. They agreed, however, to give us \$250 million as a short-term loan.

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President Farooq Leghari advised me to be on the move as much as possible. He even suggested that as foreign minister, I should have an aircraft at my disposal. When I looked around at the VIP planes, I realized that they had been purchased keeping in mind the personal likes and dislikes of those using them. The Boeing 737 only had the range to get to Turkey. The Falcon hardly had room for four passengers with no luggage space and it needed frequent refueling and lacked range. The aircrafts for the governor and chief minister of Punjab and Balochistan were bought with the express purpose of getting to and from Dubai for shopping trips. For the governors and chief ministers, an MI-17 Russian helicopter would have been the most appropriate; it cost approximately \$1 million (as opposed to the \$12 million jets they insisted on having), and it could take them anywhere (unlike the jets, which could only be used in places with airfields). What would have been ideal for us in the foreign ministry was a second-hand aircraft which could fly non-stop for up to 7000 km and could accommodate about twelve persons with ample luggage space. However, we could not even think of buying a plane due to financial considerations, even if they were to be used by the President and PM.

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From 12 to 14 May 1997, a SAARC meeting was held on an island resort in the Maldives. This provided the opportunity for India-Pakistan talks on the sidelines. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif went into a one-to-one meeting with the Indian PM, Mr I.K. Gujral, while the delegations of the two countries discussed relaxation of visa restrictions, increase in goods, train services

and other minor issues. The Kashmir issue came up in the prime ministers' meeting and was then deferred for discussion by the foreign secretaries in Islamabad. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif left for Ashkabad to attend a meeting and I stayed behind for the conclusion of the conference.

The secretary, level talks were held in Islamabad. These lasted for a few days, after which a joint statement was signed and issued to the press on 23 June 1997, listing the eight-point agenda agreed to for a composite dialogue. However, on his return to New Delhi, the Indian Secretary of External Affairs, Salman Haider, reneged on his statement on Kashmir. It seemed that there were forces in the Indian external affairs ministry following their own agenda in defiance of Mr Gujral's authority as their Prime Minister.

In the first week of March 1997, Mr Amanullah Khan, who was working for the US Embassy, invited me for dinner. Also present were the American ambassador, Mr Thomas W. Simons Jr., and another official from the embassy. I broached the subject of the resolution of the Kashmir problem and also the need to improve US-Pakistan relations. After a long discussion the US ambassador said, 'If you leave the solution of the Jammu and Kashmir problem to us, then we could try to solve it in due course if both sides agree. But the solution would not be to the satisfaction of either India or Pakistan.' He then said that he would arrange a meeting in Washington between me and Ms Albright to discuss a range of issues.

One of the issues to be discussed was the F-16 issue. The aircrafts were being kept at an airfield in Texas. The American government was not releasing them nor was it returning the \$600 million we had paid for them. This was probably the only transaction where a product had been retained despite receipt of payment. Unknown Pakistani-Americans were contacting the PM directly and offering help. One such individual convinced the PM that if he was given \$10 million, he would be able to lobby the administration and President Clinton to release the

F-16s to Pakistan. I told the PM that the chances of getting the F-16s released were very slim and that we should concentrate on getting our money back instead. I also warned him against paying attention to such individuals who would simply pocket the money and produce no results.

I met lawyers in Washington on 19 May 1997, to look into the possibility of suing the American government for the return of our money if the F-16 aircraft could not be given to us due to the sanctions imposed against Pakistan. It was a good case as it would have put pressure on the administration to settle the matter out of court. However, as we got to the stage when a final decision was to be taken, the PM decided to advertise for law firms to bid for the case. I informed the PM we might not get the best service and could lose the case by saving a few dollars. Sensing failure, I suggested that the case of the F-16s be given to the defence ministry. Thankfully, the PM accepted my suggestion and did not change firms.

I visited the UN on 21 May 1997 and met Mr Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General. I discussed with Mr Annan the need for the UN to take a more active role in the settlement of the Kashmir dispute. The UN resolutions were still valid, after all. I requested him to send more observers to the line of control to invalidate the Indian accusations of infiltration into Indian-held Kashmir. We also discussed the Afghan situation. The UN was keen to put an oil embargo on the Taliban. I had been to Haiti and told the Secretary General how the country had been ruined due to the oil embargo there. Afghanistan had very bad roads and no railway system, and an embargo would reduce the poor to a state of desperation in their quest for food and fuel. I think that meeting played a part in convincing the UN not to put a fuel embargo on Afghanistan.

My meeting with the American Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, had been scheduled for 20 May 1997. Our ambassador in Washington, Mr Riaz Khokhar, warned me that the Pakistani foreign ministers had been getting a drubbing from the Secretary

of State on issues of concern to the US. However, my meeting with Ms Albright went extremely well. There was a sense of confidence and trust between us. After the general meeting was over, she requested a one-to-one meeting in which she expressed the desire to help Pakistani military officers attend American training courses. It was in their own interest to extend this offer, as America was losing contact with the Pakistan armed forces. On the matter of Kashmir, I requested her to extend support and nudge India to go in for a meaningful settlement. I extended her an invitation to visit Pakistan, which she readily accepted. I also raised the issue of the F-16s and asked that the aircrafts either be given to us or the money refunded. If neither of the two was possible, another option was to settle the matter in court. She said that all these possibilities would be looked into. I informed her that Pakistan was the only country in the world that had used the F-16 fighter for the purpose it was built for: to shoot down Soviet fighters (the Soviet SU-22 operating from Afghanistan).

When the meeting reached a close, Ms Albright and I shook hands, and she said: 'We will be in touch. Call me Madeleine, and you are Gohar for me.' An excellent and encouraging relationship had developed. We met again on 30 June 1997 in Hong Kong during the ceremony of the handover of Hong Kong to China. I took her hand and moved her aside and reminded her again of the need to resolve the Kashmir dispute. 'You would have done a historical job and brought the two countries on the road to peace and prosperity,' I encouraged her. On leaving I reminded her that her father had proposed a solution for Kashmir which should be followed up by her.

When Madeleine Albright came to Pakistan on 17 November 1997, I received her at the airport. I organized meetings in the foreign ministry, meetings with the PM and the President, and accompanied her to Peshawar on her request to see an Afghan refugee camp, an Afghan girls' school and the Afghan de-mining team who worked with dogs trained by the Americans. The American concerns at the time were focused on the CTBT, non-

proliferation, Pakistan's nuclear programme and the Taliban in Afghanistan. The question of Osama bin Laden or Al Qaeda was never raised. In fact, I had been engaged with practically all the players on the world stage and no one ever mentioned Osama bin Laden.

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The Iranian election took place during the first week of June 1997. Sayyed Mohammad Khatami emerged the winner. The PM and I were to attend the D8 meeting in Istanbul and it had been decided we would stop overnight in Tehran to meet the president-elect. The meeting with the sitting President Rafsanjani was set for 'one plus four', meaning the prime minister and four others, all of whom had already been designated. As our delegation moved into the room where the Iranian delegation awaited us, the PM encouraged two prominent media-persons to accompany him. The Iranians were taken aback. I could not ask the two uninvited guests to leave the room as the PM himself had invited them in. However, I knew that the talks would not be of substance in their presence. The idea of the talks was to build confidence between us on Afghanistan, and bridge the gulf that was slowly expanding between us. As expected, the meeting lacked substance.

After the meeting, we moved to a conference room for which the Pakistani team had again been designated in advance. But here too, the two gentlemen (along with two others this time) came along. This meeting too did not move beyond pleasantries. I passed a note to the PM saying that the Iranian president will not open up before this large Pakistani gathering and that he should ask for a one-to-one meeting with Mr Rafsanjani. They then met one-to-one.

While travelling to the guest house, the Iranian ambassador to Pakistan sat in my car. I told him that we should arrange



another meeting for the leaders to discuss matters in greater detail.

Apart from the Afghanistan issue, our relations with Iran were getting murky due to the killing of Iranian officials, cadets and engineers based in Pakistan. One Irani diplomat had been killed in Multan, another in Lahore. Five cadets from the Iranian air force were killed near Rawalpindi in a van going to Dhamial airfield for training. One of their engineers was killed on the bridge being constructed by them in Karachi. Many of these killings were carried out by Sunni terrorist organisations. The Iranians had succeeded in stamping out terrorism in their own country, and felt we were not fully trained or committed to do the same.

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I went to China in mid 1997 for talks with my counterpart, Mr Qian Qichen. The meeting was very detailed and fruitful. I informed him that we may be testing our long range missiles and would like them to have advance information about it. I asked for a one-to-one meeting in which we strengthened our relationship in the political and military fields. A meeting between the prime ministers of our countries was also scheduled.

When Nawaz Sharif arrived for talks with the Chinese PM, the most pressing issue on our agenda was funds. Our reserves were very low. They were being padded up by short term loans from China and Saudi Arabia, Abu Dhabi and Kuwait. A loan of \$250 million had been negotiated with the Chinese government and they were also going to give us a grant of approximately \$5 million. During breakfast in the State Guest House, Nawaz Sharif told me and the Finance Minister, Sartaj Aziz, that he was not going to ask for the loan of \$250 million or accept the grant of \$5 million. I was shocked.

'What have we come here for then?' I asked him. 'To see the Great Wall of China?'

Nawaz Sharif repeated, 'I will not ask for the money.'

We had gone to great pains to bring about this visit and here he was, acting like a child!

We went into the meeting with the Chinese PM and his team. All issues of concern to Pakistan and China were discussed, but still Nawaz Sharif refused to raise the money issue. Finally the Chinese PM reiterated his offer of the \$250 million loan and the \$5 million grant. Nawaz Sharif had to accept the offer, of course, and half-heartedly thanked the Chinese PM.

I was shocked by the PM's behaviour on that trip. One thing became clear: it was not going to be easy for us—at least in the foreign ministry—to do what needed to be done.

# 23

## INSIDE HAPPENINGS

UPON MY RETURN from the United States on 20 May 1997, I was informed by my staff that Mr Siddique Khan Kanju had been appointed the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. He was a good friend of mine and we had worked together since 1985. Mr Kanju came to my office the next day and asked me what his responsibilities were. I was a little surprised at this and told him that the rules of business would determine his responsibilities. During our meeting, I came to know that Mr Kanju wanted to be above the foreign secretary and expected the latter to report to him. I told him that would not be possible according to the rules.

When I walked into a meeting with the PM a week later, I was surprised to find Mr Nisar Ali Khan and Mr Kanju there as well. Upon seeing them, I mentally prepared myself for a long discussion—there wasn't going to be much discussion on ministry affairs, I knew. One thing was for sure: Shahbaz Sharif, being a close friend of Kanju, would probably factor heavily in whatever topic was discussed.

The meeting began. After some time, the PM disclosed that he would like to hand over some of my responsibilities to Mr Kanju. I told the PM that if I needed help I would have asked him for a minister of state myself; however, if he was making the suggestion because he felt that I was not doing my job well enough, he should simply remove me. I went on to say, addressing the PM the entire time, that since he had been exhorting me to look east, I would give Mr Kanju the countries east of India to

look after—but Mr Kanju would have to report to me directly. Nobody at that table liked what I had said.

'After all, if I am to be the foreign minister, I will run the ministry and be responsible for it. I do not want any splits or divided loyalties, nor do I want to be in a position where I may be required to shield information, especially on sensitive issues'—and if Kanju's director was handling that kind of sensitive information, I feared it would be passed on to the Bhuttos.

The PM said, 'Gohar Sahib, are you still thinking I have put Kanju in to forestall you?'

'Well, yes,' I said frankly. The PM had not consulted me about any of this beforehand. What I could deduce from this move was that Nawaz Sharif wanted dissension in the foreign ministry—as there had been when Kanju was in that role (i.e., minister of state for foreign affairs) from 1990 to 1993. But as it turned out, after that meeting, everything returned to the status quo. Henceforth, I took extra care in the way I ran the ministry and became stricter about following the ministry's rules of business. In the end, there were no problems with Mr Kanju.

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Nawaz Sharif and I met President Clinton in New York to request him to intervene for the resolution of the Kashmir dispute. President Clinton said: 'The Indians want [the issue] to be settled bilaterally. Regardless, we have not developed leverage with India as yet. India sided with the Soviet Union during the Cold War, and was also with the non-aligned movement. It'll take about three to four years to develop some leverage with them.' We also discussed the delivery of the F-16s and the alternative of refunding the money we had paid for the planes. Mr Clinton was agreeable to the latter arrangement.

On that trip to New York—(on which we also met the Indian PM, Mr I.K. Gujral)—I told Mushahid Hussain Sayed, the

Information Minister, that we should ensure good coverage in the American media. The PM addressed the UN General Assembly and spoke about the resolution of the Kashmir dispute and offered a no-war pact with India. All the meetings that took place during that visit were high profile ones and were well reported in the Pakistani media but not a word about them appeared in the American press. I pointed this out to the PM (who was going through a stack of newspapers and looking very dismayed) and to Mr Mushahid Hussain. Mr Hussain said that the PM would have to make himself available to address the journalists in person if we wanted good coverage.

And so a press conference was arranged in the Roosevelt Hotel in New York. Before we arrived at the venue for the press conference, I told the Mr Hussain to ensure some white faces amongst the press representatives. When we arrived at the hotel, a large number of correspondents were present but only three of them were non-Pakistanis. Once again, not a word from the press conference appeared in any US paper or TV channel.

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I went to New Delhi in the first week of April 1997 to attend the NAM conference. I was informed by the High Commission staff that the South African Foreign Minister, Mr Alfred Nzo (who was also attending the conference) had invited me for dinner at the residence of the South African High Commissioner in New Delhi. I accepted the invitation, expecting there to be a number of foreign ministers at the dinner party. When I arrived at the South African High Commissioner's residence, I found that I was the only guest other than the foreign minister and the host himself. Mr Nzo invited me to South Africa; I accepted the invitation. This was a good opportunity to explore the possibility of sourcing military and air force equipment and technical know-how from South Africa.

In South Africa, from 24 to 27 January 1998, I brought forth the issue of Kashmir and praised the role of President Nelson Mandela for having suggested that he could play a part in resolving the Kashmir dispute—which India had rejected and Pakistan had accepted.

My South African hosts were gracious enough to give me a short tour as well. I was taken to the township of Soweto, where the uprising against the racist white regime had begun. We also went through Kruger Park, a massive wildlife conservation area, in a cavalcade of five white Mercedes cars provided by the South African foreign ministry. A game warden with a .458 magnum rifle sat in the front seat, and my wife and I sat in the rear. As luck would have it, there were no lions, leopards, cheetahs, or rhinos to be seen. We did spot two elephants though, and a hippopotamus in a pond and a few gazelles. I was disappointed; I had heard so much about Kruger Park. The South African foreign office liaison officers grumbled, saying that the park authorities should have spotted these animals beforehand and directed us towards them.

The DG of the air weapons complex from Pakistan had visited South Africa a few days before me. He was keen that I visit a plant manufacturing pilot-less drones, air-to-air and air-to-ground missiles. What the South Africans were manufacturing was impressive. The helmets used by their fighter pilots (which were manufactured in South Africa) were far more advanced than Israeli helmets.

I was sent to South Africa once more a year later to represent Pakistan at the installation ceremony of Mr Thabo Mbeki as President on 16 June 1999. At the ceremony, guests were announced as they arrived and then directed to their seats by liaison officers. President Gaddafi received the loudest and most sustained applause, followed by Chairman Yasser Arafat. This surprised many European and American delegates. A lunch was hosted by our high commissioner in a local hotel where he had invited a number of journalists who asked me about the clashes

taking place in Kargil and about the downing of two Indian MIG fighters. I explained to them that these planes had encroached into Pakistani airspace. They also wanted to know what our reaction would be if India purchased the 155mm Bofors ammunition from South Africa. I told them that Pakistan would protest to such a sale.

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I received a message from the PM's office on 20 May 1997—I was in Washington at the time—asking me to proceed to London and meet the British foreign secretary and prime minister. I had no idea why I was being asked to go, and inquired what the urgency was. I was informed that an Indian minister had carried letters from the Indian prime minister to the British leaders, so I should do the same to explain the situation in occupied Kashmir. I could not get appointments with the British at such short notice (which pleased me), and I returned to Pakistan. I went to London a month later and had a good discussion with the British Foreign Secretary, Mr Robin Cook, and delivered a letter from our prime minister to Mr Tony Blair, seeking his support in the resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

In September 1997, the Argentinian Foreign Minister, Mr Guido Di Tella, called on me while I was in New York to attend the United Nations General Assembly session. I was pleasantly surprised by his desire to meet me, as I was keen to develop better relations with Central and South American countries. Mr Di Tella expressed his desire to come to Pakistan, so I invited him. I also suggested the Argentinian President, Mr Carlos Menem, should participate in the 23 March parade in Islamabad, which would bring Pakistan to the attention of Central and South American countries. However, this did not materialize for the usual reason—the assemblies were dissolved after a military takeover on 12 October 1999.

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Mr Ahmed Saeed, a businessman living in Washington, was a personal friend of PM Nawaz Sharif. He would receive the PM whenever he went to Europe, the USA, the Gulf and Saudi Arabia, and on the PM's insistence Mr Saeed was given VVIP status by each host country. He even had access to the PM's bedroom and they enjoyed a very special relationship. It was not proper for a personal friend—who was possibly a partner in some business or looking after funds abroad—to be given such importance. Mr Ahmed Saeed himself was a quiet and a gentle person. It was the PM who would elevate him to a high profile position during his foreign visits. He even sanctioned a diplomatic passport for Mr Saeed and made him an Honorary Consul General in Washington. There was no need for an Honorary Consul General in Washington—our embassy there was doing quite a good job—and of course such moves by the PM became a matter of concern for us in the foreign ministry and for our missions abroad.

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The move to impeach President Leghari came up for consideration by the Muslim League Party on 19 November 1997. He finally resigned on 2 December 1997. The PM then searched for the most docile candidate he could find, preferably someone who would not even breathe without his consent. Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar (MNA), Fida Mohammad Khan (former governor NWFP), and Sartaj Aziz were being considered. That Justice (retd) M. Rafiq Tarrar was chosen to be President came as a surprise to all, not least to himself. (Mr Tarrar was a friend of Mian Mohammad Sharif).

Meanwhile, the tussle between the PM and the Chief Justice was reaching its peak. I got a call from the PM on 5 November 1997 asking me to come and see him in his chamber in the National Assembly. When I arrived, I found the members of the Privileges Committee (Nawabzada Iqbal Mehdi and others)



present in the cabinet room. The PM asked the chairman of the privileges committee to explain the situation to me. The chairman said that they wanted to summon the Chief Justice before the committee, and all those present (including the PM) concurred. I told them that the rules did not provide for such a drastic step. 'It will not be taken notice of,' I warned them. 'I have prepared the rules as the Speaker. No, you cannot summon him, and if you make the mistake of doing so, he will disregard your summons. The committee and the PM will be insulted.'

With that, the discussion came to an end. The PM asked me to accompany him to the PM House. In the car, the PM put his hand on my knee, and said: 'Gohar Sahib, show me a way to arrest the Chief Justice and keep him in jail for a night.'

'For heaven's sake, do not even consider doing anything of the sort. The whole system will collapse!' I told him.

He said no more.

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The prime ministers of India and Pakistan met on the sidelines of the SAARC summit in Colombo on 29 July 1998. The Indian PM, Mr Vajpayee, asked for a one-to-one meeting with PM Nawaz Sharif. The meeting continued for nearly an hour. I, along with Mr Shamshad Ahmad, went in during the meeting. The issue of Kashmir was being discussed. The Indian PM was not prepared to address the issue and wanted the foreign secretaries to meet and discuss it between them. When I pressed the Indian PM to announce the initiation of talks on Kashmir, Mr Mishra, the advisor to the Indian PM, said that that would not be possible as there was too much public pressure on the PM. I asked Mr Mishra how the foreign secretaries would make headway on the matter if the prime minister could not. Neither the Indian PM nor Mishra responded. A joint press conference had been scheduled for after the meeting but we decided to put it off.

The SAARC meeting over, the delegates were taken by train to a resort about fifty miles outside Colombo. The train ran close to the sea, through coconut palm groves. While having lunch at a spot overlooking the sea, the prime ministers and the King of Bhutan were sitting at one table and the foreign ministers at the other. Nawaz Sharif's ADC came up to my table to tell me that the PM wanted to see me. When I approached the PM, he asked me: 'When did Alexander the Great invade India?'

'326 BC,' I replied straight away. Mr Vajpayee seemed very impressed and Nawaz Sharif had a broad satisfied smile on his face. When leaving the dining room, Mr Vajpayee patted me on the back and asked after my health. The Indian prime minister had always thought of me as an India-hater.

On returning to Islamabad, I had my director write to the PM secretariat to get a copy of the minutes for the Colombo meeting. I was told that no minutes existed.

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Mr Nawaz Sharif's kitchen cabinet was comprised almost entirely of Punjabis. Nawaz Sharif liked to surround himself with people who would stick to him like leeches wherever he went, regardless of whether there was any need for them or not. Many of his ministers took advantage of him as well. His inability to respond to questions on the spot was exploited by a certain minister who more or less stayed with him day in and day out, whispering suggestions into his ear—it got to the point that Nawaz Sharif would feel uncomfortable without him. Another kitchen cabinet member thought of himself as the real prime minister and acted with little regard for Nawaz Sharif. Two ministers were masters at cutting in from nowhere, forcing their way next to the prime minister, and after photos had been taken, disappearing as suddenly as they had appeared.

In a party meeting in early March 1997—it was Nawaz Sharif's second term—Mr Kanju, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs,

raised the issue of constitutional amendments to do away with the power of the President and to dissolve the assembly with Article 58(2)(b). Mr Kanju must have been asked by Nawaz Sharif to bring up the issue because all other issues on the agenda were instantly dropped and the PM eagerly picked up on the topic and ran with it. There is no doubt the PM had done his homework well. President Farooq Khan Leghari and General Karamat gave their assent. Benazir was enthusiastic about passing the amendment as she too had suffered twice due to the President's powers. Both the 13th and 14th Amendments to the Constitution were passed unanimously on 1 April 1997 and 1 June 1997 respectively.

The next move came unexpectedly; the cabal in Lahore (headed by Mian Sharif) then coaxed the PM to pass the 15th Amendment next, the draft of which was presented in a party meeting. The members were taken aback, and asked him who had prepared the draft. He refused to give names. The draft drew a lot of opposition and had to be watered down considerably. It could not be shelved completely, because the PM was in no mood to withdraw it.

Similarly, the PM decided that those who were office bearers of both the party and the government would have to make a choice between the two offices—with himself as the only exception. No minister was to display the Pakistan flag on their cars. Only the PM was allowed to do so, and in fact, he was allowed two flags: one of the party and the other of the nation. All ministers were to use cars not exceeding 1300cc, but the PM could retain his expensive Mercedes. The PM would pull out chits of paper from his waistcoat with a list of decisions he had already made prior to the meeting; a meeting which had been called precisely to deliberate about those decisions. A debate in which he saw his point not finding favour amongst the others would seldom be allowed to conclude. If one wanted him to agree to something, it had to be whispered into his ear by his

kitchen cabinet colleagues; he would then take it up as his idea and show much enthusiasm for it.

Begum Abida Hussain would often say that Nawaz Sharif was not intelligent, so a select team should be formed to guide him. Nawaz Sharif was too clever to let such teams be formed. In any case the *Panj Pyaras* (Five Beloved) who constituted the kitchen cabinet would not let anyone else near the PM. In fact, during the first term, one of the '*Panj Pyaras*' did most of the PM's office work while Nawaz Sharif spent endless days going on tours in his helicopter.

## Relations with Afghanistan

Afghanistan became a big issue in the region after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, and continued to be an important influence on our foreign policy and international relations. On 30 August 1997, Mr Lakhdar Brahimi, the special representative to the UN, came to the foreign ministry for discussions on Afghanistan. He was on his way to Kabul and would meet us again upon his return to discuss prospects for the establishment of a broad-based government in Afghanistan. He had travelled to Afghanistan on a number of occasions to bring the various factions together on one platform, but unfortunately the Afghan factions were more interested in extracting money from him than they were in resolving their conflicts.

After lunch in the ministry, Mr Brahimi and I were walking out of the room when he remarked, 'Foreign Minister, the situation in the world is such that even if a husband and wife have a difference of opinion, they have to go to Washington for its settlement!'

Meanwhile, the Americans had kept in touch with Haji Abdul Haq (despite the Americans' claims that they had not), who had been brought by them from Dubai to Peshawar to be a potential candidate for leading the government in Afghanistan. Haji Abdul

Haq was an extrovert, fluent in English, and had contacts in various capitals. He would have been the first choice of the Americans, but he was arrested when he entered Afghanistan with a suitcase full of dollars and could not be rescued by the American helicopters that tried to save him. He was hanged by the Taliban. Some say he was an agent of the British intelligence agencies and the CIA.

The war against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan was totally different from Franco's struggle in Spain, Mao Zedong's long march in China, Tito's fight in Yugoslavia, or Castro's in Cuba. In all of these struggles, there was a central leadership which emerged from the movement and headed the new government after the resistance seized control. In Afghanistan no such central leadership developed. Instead, they fought amongst themselves after the Soviets withdrew, which led to a state of anarchy and lawlessness in the country. It was under these conditions that the Taliban emerged, with Mullah Omar as their spiritual and military leader. Afghanistan, being a backward society, accepted the Taliban in the Pashtun areas. There was resentment against them in the cities, especially in Kabul. The Taliban were not a product of General Naseerullah Babar or the ISI, as is commonly claimed.

In fact, the rise of the Taliban took all Mujahideen factions and parties by surprise. The Mujahideen leaders suddenly found themselves accused of corruption and inciting factional war in Afghanistan. In most areas, the Taliban took over without a fight. They spread their influence first in the Pashtun areas and then in the north-west and the north-east (except the Punjshir valley and Badakhshan). They brought relative peace to war-torn Afghanistan, eradicated poppy cultivation and collected and confiscated illegal arms even from the remotest regions. Their attitude towards women was very retrogressive due to which nearly half the population suffered. The Taliban were really like a frog in a well, living quite happily in it but unaware of the outside world.

The morning of 25 May 1997, I returned to Islamabad from Washington and went to Haripur, where I had set the day aside for meetings with my constituents. At 11 a.m. I received a call from the DG ISI, Lieutenant General Naseem Rana, saying that he had the approval of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to recognize the Taliban government, and the PM had asked him to have the matter done by the foreign ministry. A few minutes later the Principal Secretary to the PM, Mr Sher Dil Niazi, called me to say that a C-130 transport plane was taking the Pakistani Ambassador, Aziz Ahmad Khan, to Mazar-i-Sharif. Meanwhile, the DG ISI was breathing down the neck of the Additional Secretary for Afghanistan, Mr Iftikhar Murshid, and asking why we 'foreign affairs *babus*' were not announcing the recognition. The DG ISI called me yet again and said, 'We must be the first to recognize the Taliban. I informed Iftikhar Murshid that I am coming to Islamabad.'

The Taliban's takeover of Mazar-i-Sharif put them in control of 85 per cent of the country. In order to officially recognize any government, the following factors need to be taken into consideration are:

- Do they control the capital?
- How much land mass do they have under their control?
- Have they restored law and order?

The Taliban government met the above criteria. The Northern Alliance was composed of the leading minorities of Afghanistan (the Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras etc.), but usually a government composed only of minorities does not qualify for recognition.

In the evening the same day (i.e. 25 May 1997) Pakistan officially recognized the Taliban government in Kabul as the Government of Afghanistan. This was acclaimed by the National Assembly and a unanimous resolution was passed praising the PM and the Foreign Minister on 26 May 1997.

The PM asked the Chief Secretary and the Chief Minister of NWFP to make contact with Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani (the President of the Northern Alliance) and bring him and his colleagues to Islamabad. Arrangements were made to send a plane to Mazar-i-Sharif for them, but the Taliban sent a message saying that they would shoot down the Pakistani plane if it flew over their territory. We then had to send the VIP Falcon to Mazar-i-Sharif via Chitral and Wakhan. It was a risky business because even if one engine of the Falcon malfunctioned, the plane would drop to an altitude of 12,000 feet and crash into the mountains. We took the risk, however, and Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani arrived in Islamabad on 23 December 1997.

Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani stayed in Peshawar for five days. We discussed at length the issue of how to form a broad-based government in Afghanistan. The Taliban complained through a private source that the Pakistanis were neither good friends nor good foes and that we were trying to straddle both positions simultaneously. I raised their misgivings in the defence committee of the cabinet but the DG ISI remarked that he had not heard about any such complaint from the Taliban.

Subsequently, some junior Taliban and Northern Alliance leaders (headed by Maulvi Fazal Hadi Shinwari) were invited to Islamabad for talks. I addressed the delegates in the Punjab House. Mr Lakhdar Brahimi was present, along with many international media agencies. Unfortunately, not much progress was made. The Taliban continued to maintain that their government was represented by Tajiks, Uzbeks, and others, and that they would not accept those leaders who were responsible for the Soviet invasion or had links with them.

Professor Rabbani, the number two in the Taliban government, was invited to Islamabad along with his delegation on 17 October 1997. The idea of a broad-based government was brought up, but it was rejected by the Taliban leader. The PM brought up the objections of the international community regarding the Taliban's policy of not allowing girls to go to school or pursue a profession.

Due to this policy, the PM warned, UNOCAL was not going to start work on the gas pipeline project. At that, Professor Rabbani turned round and said, 'What do women have to do with a gas pipeline?'

There were further issues regarding the construction of the pipeline. To reduce costs, the gas pipeline was not to be laid underground throughout but above the surface in some places, which would certainly require peace in the area. The Taliban had secured peace along the border with Turkmenistan and Pakistan, but there was still a threat that the pipeline could become a victim of sabotage by anti-government elements and warlords within Afghanistan. One thing was clear: funding was going to be very hard to come by unless the Taliban changed their policies.

We received a message from Ahmad Shah Masood, the leader of the Northern Alliance in the Punjshir valley, requesting that a meeting be held in a neutral place between his representatives and a foreign ministry official. No conditions were set by Ahmad Shah Masood. The meeting was set up in Dubai. Three meetings were held over a period of time to try to come to an agreement about setting up a broad-based government in Afghanistan. However, the demands put forward by Ahmad Shah Masood's representative were unrealistic and unconditional.

## **Diplomatic Efforts for Kashmir**

The struggle in Occupied Kashmir is indigenous and India has indulged in state terrorism against the poor people of Kashmir. Over 80,000 people have been killed and there are nearly 700,000 Indian paramilitary forces, border security forces, police and regular soldiers posted there, not counting the village defence forces they have raised and armed. Villagers, usually Hindu or Sikh ex-soldiers, are given about 12 rifles per village to fight against the freedom fighters.



India is a democratic country. It should allow the people of Kashmir to decide their fate by exercising their right to vote either for India or Pakistan. India in the past fifty years must have done some good in Occupied Kashmir if it claims to have won the hearts and minds of the Kashmiri people. If it has done so, it should be confident of the decision of the people. How long will it keep them suppressed?

While in London on 26 July 1997, I called on the Secretary General of the Commonwealth and briefed him on the Kashmir situation, stressing the necessity for a foreseeable resolution of the dispute. I was of the view that unless this issue was dealt with, India and Pakistan both would continue to spend tremendous amounts on defence—amounts which neither country could afford. That money would be better spent on schools, hospitals and roads; on the improvement of the standard of living of our people. India's excuse that its defence preparations were a response to the Chinese was blatantly false, since all the weapons systems it was building were Pakistan-specific. I told the Secretary General of the Commonwealth that the role the Commonwealth should play in the future should not just be that of a group of former colonials meeting once a year to express their views, but rather it should be such that member countries receive some tangible benefit from the forum.

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The hand over of Hong Kong was to take place on 30 June 1997. I was representing Pakistan at the event. The British and the Chinese had made very elaborate arrangements, and while the latter were insisting that the ceremony be held indoors, the former wanted it in the open. We all took our designated places under a partially open canopy. It was raining and everyone was getting wet. It so happened that Zeb and I were sitting in a place protected from the rain. Mr Primakov, the Foreign Minister of Russia, sat behind us with his delegation; they too, were out of

the rain. All the others—including the Chinese President, Jiang Zemin, Prince Charles, and Tony Blair—were getting wet. Mr Primakov tapped me on the shoulder and pointed out the fact that only our two delegations had remained protected from the rain. We struck up a good rapport then, and also spent time together during some of the other evening functions. Coincidentally, I was due in Russia for a visit just a few days later.

I arrived in Moscow on 8 July 1997. The meeting with Mr Primakov went well. The cold war was over, I reiterated, and Soviet troops had withdrawn from Afghanistan—we were no more in any kind of competition or confrontation. ‘I know of your relations with India,’ I said, ‘But remember that we are also a part of the region. During the late sixties, it was Russia that had us sign the Tashkent Declaration. We have also had contacts in the military and economic fields. President Ayub Khan visited Moscow. You can play a role to bring India and Pakistan to a resolution regarding the Kashmir dispute.’

I also brought up the issue regarding the tanks we had wanted to purchase from them but they would not sell them to us, so we bought them from the Ukraine instead. I told him that this time we were interested in the SU-27 jet fighter. ‘I can have the PM come to Moscow to discuss all these issues,’ I said.

Mr Primakov answered, ‘I will be very frank and honest with you. You have been sincere in what you have just said. But there are some issues here.’ He felt that Pakistan wanted to use Russia to obtain the release of the F-16s from the USA and further that Pakistan did not have the money to buy the SU-27. I told him that we had accepted the fact that the Americans were not giving us the F-16s and that I was in the process of preparing to go to court to get our money back. I also assured him that we had the money for 320 T-80 tanks being supplied by Ukraine, so having enough to pay for the SU-27 was not a problem. ‘I am sure you like dollars,’ I said to him, ‘If you are willing to negotiate regarding the SU-27, we can get the money for it. However, if

you ask me to produce the amount for you at this very moment and lay it on the table, I cannot do so.'

Mr Primakov looked me in the eye, and said, 'Let's start with dual purpose equipment. After building confidence, we can consider moving further.' He then moved on to the subject of Afghanistan and expressed his concern that the Taliban would raise problems for Pakistan and the Central Asian states. He feared that their movement could spread and destabilize the underbelly of Russia. To my surprise, Mr Primakov spoke good Arabic and was in fact an expert on the Arabs. My final lunch with Primakov was relaxed and we spoke earnestly about improving relations between our countries.

Russia congratulated us on our Independence Day on 14 August 1997. It had never done so in the past, and the gesture was the result of the confidence that had been built over the course of this visit.

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The Japanese Foreign Minister, Mr Obuchi, invited me to Japan. I arrived in Japan on 9 March 1998, where I received a warm welcome. A sum of \$250 million which had been held back by them due to sanctions was released for development projects. Mr Obuchi was keen to play an active role in the pacification of Afghanistan, and offered to host the first meeting of various Afghan factions in Japan. A meeting of leading Japanese businessmen and industrialists was held to motivate them to invest in Pakistan.

At one point, Mr Obuchi commented, 'You and I have something in common.'

'Yes, we do. Both of us are foreign ministers,' I replied.

'No, not in this sense,' replied Mr Obuchi. 'You are 62, I am 62, Madame Albright is 62, Primakov is 62, but the bad thing is that Saddam Hussein is also 62!'

We laughed.

Bill Richardson, (who at the time was the US ambassador to the UN, and is currently the governor of New Mexico), came to Pakistan with his delegation on 16 April 1997 from New Delhi with an assurance that India was not in the process of testing a nuclear device. We had taken the Indians' declaration that they were including nuclear weapons in their arsenal seriously, and I told Bill Richardson that he had been taken for a ride by the Indians. 'Are you saying that we've been made suckers?' he remarked. I nodded.

We then moved on to the Kashmir issue. I also gave him a briefing on the situation in Afghanistan as he was due to visit Afghanistan next.

### **Negotiations with the Central Asian States and the Gas Pipeline Project**

Pakistan had given a loan of \$10 million each to the Central Asian states in 1992 for development projects. When I visited these countries in June 1997, I tried to see how this money had been utilized. Our ambassadors could not give me details or even identify the projects on which this money had been spent. Turkey's contribution came in the form of constructing five-star hotels for the Central Asian states. The hotels are a landmark and are running profitably. Turkey's contribution is visible, ours is not.

I made a quick tour of the Central Asian states. All of them, except Turkmenistan, were worried about the Taliban and the possibility of the Taliban encroaching into their countries.

I asked Tajikistan for tanks along with spare parts, and SU-27 aircraft. They were ready to supply them and the president assured me the supply of spare parts. However, it was proving difficult to get the Pakistan Air Force to buy these planes; they

were looking instead for the Mirage 2000, which cost nearly \$90 million a piece. I could not understand why the PAF did not want to compensate for the shortages in their fighter fleet; at that point, their fleet was so small that they would have been in difficulty in the event of a war. The SU-27 could have been upgraded in the republics and brought to Pakistan at throw away prices. Iran too had bought a large number of tanks, armoured personnel carriers, guns, and self-propelled guns at scrap value from Russia.

The president of Turkmenistan was very keen about the gas pipeline project that was to be built between Turkmenistan and Pakistan, passing through Afghanistan. When I met him in Ashkabad, he told me to encourage the president of UNOCAL to start work on the project, and leave Afghanistan out of the picture till things settled down. He said he would pledge the use of his country's oil resources for the construction of the pipeline. The project was to cost approximately \$2.2 billion. As mentioned earlier, the pipeline was to be laid in some areas above ground rather than underground to save on the cost. Further saving could occur if the gas pipeline was taken to northern India to supply that region.

The president of UNOCAL flatly refused to go ahead with the project. He was under immense pressure from various NGOs and from the US administration not to start the project as long as the Taliban government was in power. The US was keen that gas and oil from the Caspian Sea and Turkmenistan go westwards instead, avoiding Iran and Afghanistan. UNOCAL finally abandoned the pipeline project and it was taken over by BRIDAS. Still, no progress was made. Financing the project without US approval was posing problems.

There were also talks with Qatar about the possibility of a gas pipeline. We were also considering talks with Iran. The projection was that there could well be gas shortages in Pakistan by 2008, and it was important that at least one of these proposed pipelines be completed and operational by then.

## The 1998 Nuclear Tests

India conducted its nuclear tests on 11 May 1998 at Pokhran. PM Nawaz Sharif was in Kazakhstan. He was due to return at 11 a.m. on 12 May 1998, but he delayed his return by three hours. When he arrived, I met him as he got off the plane and asked him to immediately call a cabinet meeting as well as a separate meeting of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC). This should have been done by him from Kazakhstan, but he was not keen on taking an initiative.

The PM was lukewarm upon meeting me. He called a meeting of the cabinet, at which Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan right away opposed any tests from our side. This was followed by similar statements from ministers Sartaj Aziz, Mushahid Hussain and Begum Abida Hussain. I had been listening quietly till then, and could not hold back any more. The indignation in my voice was clear when I said that if we did not respond with tests of our own, the Pakistani people would come out onto the streets in all the major cities and we would be swept aside; we would simply be paving the way for someone else to gain the people's respect. The meeting slowly turned towards the possibility of conducting nuclear tests. In the meeting of the DCC on 13 May 1998, I repeated my argument in support of testing. Raja Zafar-ul-Haq asked General Jehangir Karamat for his views. He said we could match India, but the decision to do so would have to be a political one. We then moved on to talking about logistics. It was decided that we would carry out six tests and the *Shaheen* missile would be tested as well. (On further consideration, the latter was put off to a later date). A minimum of twelve days was required to prepare for the tests, and any change of decision would have to be communicated at least three days before the devices were installed in the test tunnel. (The tunnel would be sealed after installation of the devices). A committee was constituted to prepare the public for the tests and the sanctions that would inevitably follow, and also to meet other political personalities

for their support. I was to meet the leader of the Opposition, Benazir.

Two days later, the DCC met again. The PM announced that he was not in favour of the tests. When I reiterated my position, his face turned red with anger. A few moments later, the PM took a deep breath, looked at the people sitting around him, and said: 'I will listen to everyone's views.' As it turned out, Nawaz Sharif found himself totally out-voted. Even Saeed Mehdi his principal secretary and Anwar Zahid his advisor were in favour of testing. Realising that he was isolated, he retracted from his earlier position, and said: 'Do not misunderstand me, we will go ahead with the tests.'

The balance of payments position was discussed. Sartaj Aziz stated that we had \$900 million in reserves. I broke down the figure into its constituents and informed him that most of it was in loans. The real figure was closer to zero.

General Karamat gave a gist of how the devices would be taken to the test sites and ground-to-air missiles would be installed at the sites for defence. He also said that he would send two battalions of the SSG to the site. At that point, I said: 'General, I do not think there will be a helicopter attack or commando action, nor will there be close air strikes. As far I can see it, if they do anything, they will use cruise missiles which are fired from nearly 1,400 miles away. We have to look into this threat, the accuracy of which on an average is five square yards.'

The meeting concluded on a positive note. This was going to be a big step for Pakistan.

The American State Department was alarmed over my statements. Mr Strobe Talbott, Deputy Secretary of State, and General Zinni of the US Central Command, came to Islamabad on 16 May 1998 for discussions with the Foreign Office. After Strobe Talbott finished his opening remarks there was a heated onslaught from our side. I explained to them that I had written to about fifteen of my counterparts around the world before the Indians had conducted their tests, asking them to stop India

from inducting nuclear weapons. The PM also had written to his counterparts. How was it possible for the USA not to have taken note of the developments over the Pokhran test site? The Indian preparations for the test could only have proceeded if the intention of the US had been to look the other way. Even the most inexperienced person looking at satellite imagery could not have missed the build-up around the test site.

'We just missed it,' General Zinni said.

'How convenient,' I replied caustically.

Turning to General Zinni I said: 'General, would the US army not first test a simple thing like a belt or a bottle before induction?' He nodded his head in acceptance. 'Then tell me how India was going to induct nuclear weapons without testing?'

The US delegation suggested that Pakistan take the moral high ground by not testing. If Pakistan did go ahead with the tests, they warned, it would only jeopardize the possibilities of financial assistance in the future and make the release of the F-16s even more doubtful. The sanctions that would be imposed on Pakistan if it tested, would only harm Pakistan's economy and isolate it in the world community. I told them that it was precisely the sanctions they had imposed on us in 1965 that had encouraged Pakistan to acquire long-range missiles and nuclear weapons; India's supplies had continued to come in from Russia which had put us in a position in which it was necessary for us to turn to missiles and nuclear weapons to ensure our national security. I told the Americans that despite economic hardship we would come out stronger, as China had done, despite sanctions. As for the F-16 issue, I made it known that the engines had not been tuned for a long time, and that had made them the equivalent of a piece of junk.

The US was, in my view, cuddling up to India. I was sure that the sanctions on India would be lifted soon, and that India would barge into the United Nations as the sixth permanent member of the Security Council. And if India could be forgiven, so could we.



The American team left the Foreign Ministry, having been told that Pakistan would give India a tit-for-tat response, and that we found the assurances of the US to be hollow due to its failure to live up to its promises in the past. The American team then went to the GHQ for a meeting with General Jehangir Karamat, where they complained that they had a rough meeting at the Foreign Ministry. This was conveyed to the PM who asked me for details of the meeting, which I gave him.

The PM called on the owners and editors of the print media to ask for their views on the proposed nuclear test, secretly hoping that most people would oppose the tests. His opening remarks to the press were ambiguous with regard to whether we were going ahead with the tests or not. After some of the editors had given their views, Mr Majid Nizami of *Nawa-i-Waqt* stood up and said that he was disappointed in him (the PM), and thought that they had been called to be given the good news that we were going to carry out nuclear tests.

It was clear that the PM wanted to avoid making a decision about testing. There was a lobby in Pakistan hoping a part of Pakistan's debt could be written off if Pakistan would refrain from testing.

A lot of foreign media had gathered in Islamabad. Nearly forty-four different networks would assemble everyday, looking for interviews with important persons in the government. Instead of addressing them all, I would give interviews to about three channels, telling them about our decision regarding testing our nuclear devices. 'It is not a question of if, but of when,' I told them. This phrase drew the media to the foreign office. The DCC then decided that the media should be handled by the foreign ministry. The information ministry tried to draw media attention towards itself, but the foreign media was not interested.

When asked by foreign correspondents how close we were to conducting nuclear tests, I told them that we were as close to it as putting a key into a lock. While the world media covered my interviews on a daily basis on practically every channel in the

world, PTV did not bother to interview me. A foreign correspondent asked me if the *Ghauri* missiles could be nuclear tipped. 'Yes, otherwise it would be an expensive way of sending bouquets,' I replied.

My statements provoked President Clinton (who was in London at the time) to have the American ambassador in Pakistan call on General Jehangir Karamat and inform him of President Clinton's concern about my statements. General Karamat sent me the minutes of his meeting with the American ambassador. The Americans had expected the ambassador's visit to the Army Chief to win over the latter, as they considered him to be close to the Pentagon. I also suspected that the ambassador must have been briefed by Mr Talbott about his earlier meeting with Nawaz Sharif, whom he had found to be indecisive. Why else would the ambassador have gone to the Army Chief instead of going directly to the PM?

The federal ministers were given the task of meeting various political leaders to bring about a consensus on the issue. All the political leaders we met supported the idea of responding to India's tests. I had been given the task of meeting Benazir Bhutto in Karachi. She asked me why there was a delay in carrying out the tests, implying that we were delaying the tests due to some uncertainty or external pressure. I explained to her that a minimum of 12 days were required to prepare for the tests, and thanked her for her support.

A report was received through England that about fifteen Israeli F-15s and F-16s had left Israel for India. I marked on the report to have our sources watch the forward airbases of India for any such aircraft. Just a few days after receiving the report, at 12:30 a.m. on 28 May 1998, I received a call from my secretary saying that an Indian/Israeli air attack on the Chaghai test site was in the process of being launched from Chennai. I told him I was on my way. I was keeping a map of India and Afghanistan on my bedside table, looking up Chennai. I was sure that the fighters would have to refuel twice going in for the attack, and

once coming back to land on the nearest Indian airbase. This was far-fetched and most unlikely, but we had to go through all the precautions. Within five minutes I was at the Crisis Management Cell. There I was told that the Director of Military Operations had informed us that Indian aircraft were being loaded with missiles at the Chennai airbase to launch an attack on Chaghai. The Director wanted us to do everything in our power to ward off this attack for four to five hours as the Quetta airbase did not have the lights that were required for night landing and take-off of our fighter jets. The Indian High Commissioner was summoned to the foreign ministry and warned of the consequences of an Indian attack. From Japan to Washington, all embassies and high commissions were informed of the threat. Mr Anwar Kamal, Pakistan's representative to the UN, went on CNN announcing the expected air attack. I told the Director of Military Operations to instruct aircraft from Karachi to fly in the flight path of the attacking jets, as the attackers would see this on their radar and call off the strike.

The attack on Chaghai did not materialise. The Americans contacted the Israeli ambassador in Washington, who was a former air chief. He confirmed that all Israeli F-15s and F-16s were in Israel. I had known that it was a false alarm based on faulty information, but we took all possible precautions till daylight.

Pakistan successfully conducted its nuclear tests the next day, as planned, on 28 May 1998. The PM and his team went to the test site in Chaghai to be present at the occasion. On television, a vast majority of the ministers who had opposed nuclear testing were present at the test site and making victory signs. On the other hand, those who had pushed for the tests had been left behind in Islamabad.

The day after the tests, we were sitting in the National Assembly when Mr Sartaj Aziz turned to me and said: 'Gohar Bhai, I really thought these devices would not work.' A member of the Defence Committee also confessed that he too had been

skeptical of our capabilities. The Indians had also probably thought the same. Little did they know that the construction of the shaft for the nuclear test had been initiated quite some years back, in 1982, under the pretext of searching for uranium. It was the finest hour for the Foreign Ministry. Everyone rose to the occasion. Never before had the Foreign Ministry delivered as it did now. The nation could be proud of it.

After the tests, the PM took all the credit for the tests, and his popularity soared. The freezing of foreign accounts, however, was a blow to the people, and it sent the wrong signal to Pakistanis abroad. The price of the dollar shot up to Rs56.

The PM went on a tour of Kuwait where he addressed the Pakistani community. They lauded the nuclear tests but criticized the freezing of their accounts. During his speech—and without consulting his finance minister—the PM announced the withdrawal of the freeze. This sent Mr Sartaj Aziz reeling, and he frantically began trying to stop the news from spreading. Luckily for him, the news did not get too far. The freeze remained in place.

Another such instance occurred when the PM, accompanied by a few ministers (including me), was on his way to Saudi Arabia. At one point during the flight, I was about to doze off when out of the corner of my eye I saw the PM talking to the Foreign Secretary, Mr Shamshad Ahmad. Mr Ahmad had a file in his hand, which was different from the white one used by the ministry and the PM secretariat. Shamshad Ahmad brought the file to me. It contained a draft proposal for a defence pact with a Gulf state and stated that the two parties would come to the other's assistance in the event of a conflict or attack. I pondered over the details of the plan and asked the PM who had drafted the pact.

'Someone,' he replied.

'Sir, do you realize that there are three or four islands in dispute between this Gulf state and Iran. If we sign this defence

agreement, we will earn the permanent hostility of Iran. They will see it as a very hostile act.'

'Which islands are these, and where are they?' he asked. I shook my head in disbelief. To proceed on something so serious in a manner so casual concerned me. What became of the draft, I do not know.

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The Chemical Weapons Convention had to be ratified. It was taken to the cabinet at the end of January 1998, but Nawaz Sharif wanted more time to study it. (In this delay we lost some slots for senior positions in the UN related to chemical weapons; we had hoped for the appointment of a few Pakistani officers to those posts). The convention was both ratified and approved in the next cabinet meeting. The foreign office had the documents for ratification signed by all concerned organizations, so that nobody would turn around later and accuse us of having made the wrong decision.

Pakistan had no chemical weapons programme, but India alleged that we had a facility in Quetta. This allegation was made to keep Pakistan under suspicion, whereas the fact is that all we had was a pre-independence factory belonging to the Marker family in Quetta, which produces medicines from local herbs.

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In April 1998, I requested the PM to relieve me of the foreign ministry and give me a different ministry instead. Elections were approaching, and a foreign minister was likely to be defeated in the election due to the busy schedules and extensive travelling involved. The PM said the change would be made during the next cabinet reshuffle. What happened next, though, I did not expect.

On 6 August 1998, Anwar Zahid, Special Assistant to the PM, came to my office in the foreign ministry and said that changes were being made in the cabinet and that I would be given the Ministry of Sports and Culture. The Ministry of Sports and Culture? I couldn't believe it.

'Mr Anwar Zahid,' I said to him firmly. 'All of you have sat down and planned this. It is not a change of ministry you have planned for me, but rather it is a collective effort to humiliate me. I do not accept the ministry of Sports and Culture. When you leave my office, I will send my resignation to the President and hold a press conference.'

'As you like,' replied Anwar Zahid. 'Would you like to speak to the PM?'

'Speak about what? You people have been at it for a long time. This is your way of easing me out. So be it.'

'Good luck to you,' he said with a smirk on his face.

Soon after the departure of Mr Anwar Zahid, I had my resignation dictated and brought in for me to sign. I had already signed it when the PM called. I told him that I was resigning, and the letter of resignation was ready, signed, and about to be sent to the President.

'No, you will do nothing of the sort!' he said in a pleading tone. 'Please, pick a ministry of your choice!'

'I don't want a ministry,' I replied.

'Listen, please don't send in your resignation,' he repeated.

'Don't speak to anyone about it either, okay? Just wait.' He hung up.

Soon Anwar Zahid was back in my office. He looked like he had just been whipped. 'Which ministry?' he asked.

'Water and Power,' I replied.

On 8 August 1998, I joined the Ministry of Water and Power.

# 24

## AS MINISTER FOR WATER AND POWER

WHEN I JOINED the Ministry of Water and Power, the ministry was grappling with heavy losses in the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) and renegotiating terms for power production with various independent power producers. On my first day at the ministry, we held a meeting with WAPDA. Mr Saif-ur-Rehman, Chairman of the Ehtesab Bureau, was also present. He was by far the most actively involved person there.

An open legal fight was being waged with the Kot Addu Power Company (KAPCO) and Hub Power Company Ltd (HUBCO) to reduce their per unit price. I wanted to get as far away from the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) as possible, as accusations of bribes could not be ruled out. The PM had constituted numerous committees to deal with the issue but no committee had been able to submit a final report. Yet, committees were being constituted left right and centre. The foreign governments, the World Bank and others were getting frustrated with Pakistan because sovereign guarantees were not being honoured, and this made them skeptical about doing business in Pakistan.

I was relieved when Saif-ur-Rehman was made the chairman of the committee and given the responsibility of negotiating with the IPPs. Large amounts of money were involved, and that made it a difficult issue to tackle. Further, someone was playing the market on the HUBCO shares. When strict action was announced, the shares would tumble, and could be picked up cheap. Soon thereafter, good news would be leaked, sending up the shares and the person or persons who owned these shares

would make windfall profits. No action was taken. In any case, the responsibility lay with Saif-ur-Rehman, as the Chairman of the Ehtesab Bureau.

The line losses were high, theft of electricity open, power breakdowns frequent. Loadshedding was inflicting heavy losses on the industries. However, even a 21 per cent tariff increase in WAPDA rates in March 1998 did not solve the company's problems. There was an outstanding sum of Rs65 billion from various government/semi-government organizations, the four provinces, Azad Kashmir and FATA. The dues that needed to be repaid to Pakistan State Oil (PSO) and the gas companies ran into billions. Some of the money owed was in inter-government organization dues, which the government should have settled, but instead allowed them to be carried forward. The balance sheet of 1997-8 showed that WAPDA's losses were Rs1.514 billion.

In a meeting with WAPDA in Lahore, I drew up plans to cut costs by Rs9 billion. The Chairman of WAPDA and others present at the meeting were confident that they could achieve this target. In a parliamentary meeting, I told the PM that I could effect a saving of Rs9 billion a year, but he had to give me a free hand to do so. He said: 'Gohar Sahib, you must generate a saving of Rs17 billion.'

'I can readily assure you and the party members of saving Rs17 billion,' I replied, 'but I know that at the end of the year this will not be achieved. I would prefer to give you figures which I will be able to deliver. And kindly do not send directives over my head to the ministry or to WAPDA. I will return WAPDA to profitability.'

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The Ghazi Barotha Project was running behind schedule because WAPDA was not making payments in time and had not handed over to the contractors some sectors of the land earmarked for



the project. The project was losing potential revenues every day due to the delay. There would be over-runs, and the contractors would have to be compensated. I wanted WAPDA to pay market rates for the land, which they did in due course.

I also visited the Chashma hydropower project. Progress had slowed down because the contractors had not been paid and were in fact planning to stop work completely. What took my breath away was the fact that some of the required equipment had been lying on the Karachi docks for eighteen months due to non-payment of duty. A further Rs1.5 billion had accumulated as demurrage. WAPDA could have lifted the machinery and posted bonds to pay the duty and demurrage in installments. The ministry then arranged this for them, and 500 trailers brought the machinery over to the Chashma project site. The same story was repeated in the case of the Chashma right bank canal. Overruns and damage claims by contractors were sanctioned and paid by WAPDA.

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The PM decided to hand WAPDA over to the army. The handover took place in late October 1988, and the number of army personnel deployed in connection with WAPDA came to about 31,000. The PM was confident that this would help in reduction of power theft, reduce the line losses, improve the distribution system, recover the outstanding sums that the company had accumulated, and even result in showing profits soon. The World Bank was not in favour of the handover because they thought that it would delay the prospects of privatizing the company.

Army teams alongside WAPDA personnel went around checking meters and cutting illegal connections which brought both organizations praise in the press. As Minister for Water and Power, I was put in an awkward position when some army men went to check the electricity meter in the farm owned by a federal minister. According to them, the meter had been

tampered with. A fine of Rs300,000 was imposed. Later, at some function, the minister exchanged hot words with General Musharraf (who was then the Army Chief) and the matter kept appearing in the press. The minister remained adamant that the claim was false, and took the matter to the High Court. Subsequently resignation of the minister was handed over to the PM who accepted it—shocking the minister.

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An opposition MNA in the National Assembly asked to be given a list of the parliamentarians who had been charged for power theft, and also wanted the amounts due from defaulters in all the provinces, AJK and government departments. I had made it a regular practice to check WAPDA's responses to questions addressed to the ministry. I would look over them and, if required, make improvements so that the MNAs would be satisfied.

It so happened that my secretary and I had gone to Lahore to attend a conference, and in our absence the ministry received the list of defaulters from WAPDA. The ministry sent the list off immediately to the National Assembly before we had even gotten a chance to look at it. When the list came up for discussion in the assembly, Mr Asfandiyar Wali rose to point out that the army was also a defaulter to WAPDA. The figure was around Rs4 billion. The army was not at all pleased with this. In any case, it was the Chairman WAPDA, Lieutenant General Zulfiqar Ali Khan who had sent this figure to the Ministry of Water and Power for submission to the National Assembly.

This issue had followed from the Chairman WAPDA's press conference in Lahore in which he had said that a number of Senators, MNAs and MPAs had been found to have defaulted on their electricity payments. (He did not mention any names). The strange thing was that the thefts in the industrial and commercial

sector was much higher, but the Chairman made no mention of those.

I wrote to the Chairman the next day, pointing out that targetting parliamentarians did indeed bring him into the headlines, but that his responsibility was also to stop theft in the industrial and commercial sectors. When he came to Islamabad, I told him that by making selective facts public, he was creating a situation in which members of the ruling party may well side with the opposition and be in a position to pass a no-confidence vote against the PM.

The parliamentarians thought that I had deliberately tried to damage them. They were clamouring to the PM that I should be brought before a committee of the Party to explain my conduct. The PM checked the records for himself to see if the parliamentarians' allegations against me were true or not. He came to the conclusion that I was not to blame.

\* \* \* \*

The High Court in Karachi had agreed to WAPDA's demand that they withhold the payment of Rs7 billion to KAPCO till the issue of tariff rates was settled in court. Similarly, the court ordered WAPDA not to pay the Rs9 billion it owed to HUBCO till the final decision was made. WAPDA had been paying these amounts to the two companies for the financial year 1997-8, but then withheld nearly Rs16 billion in the financial year 1998-9, which they showed as profit in their records.

The financial improvements claimed by WAPDA are often due to large increases in power rates. WAPDA is still subsidized by the federal government. In the financial year 1997-1998, they did not have to be subsidized—and this was under a civilian chairman. Under Lieutenant General Zulfikar Ali Khan (in the year 1998-9), the company had to be given Rs5856 million in subsidies. For the year 1999-2000, the subsidies had risen to Rs8132 million. Rs6 billion needed to be recovered from FATA,

but it was proving to be impossible, even for the Governor of the NWFP. It seemed that the best efforts of the Chairman would not pull WAPDA out of its difficulties, and losses would mount to staggering figures as would the demand for subsidies.

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The Karachi Electric Supply Corporation (KESC) was also given over to the army. The army was reluctant to take over the company and wanted to first see through their experience with WAPDA. They took it over nevertheless, but very little tangible improvement in its financial affairs took place even when the army took over. Losses were heavy, and the government was having to pick them up. The army was also finding it difficult to disconnect the 400,000 illegal connections or to have them regularized.

Subsequently, KESC and various power companies of WAPDA were prepared for privatization. This was not done for many years due to the massive losses incurred by all of these companies. However, credit must be given to the Chairman of WAPDA for saving billions by re-negotiating the per-unit cost of electricity with the IPPs after 2000. The fact of the matter is that he could only have done this under a military government; in a civilian government, his clout would not have been as effective as under the government of General Pervez Musharraf.

Pakistan has had a very poor record with regard to privatization. The heads of organizations that are to be privatized want to hang on to their jobs, so they oppose privatization tooth and nail. Margaret Thatcher once wrote to a large public sector organization in Britain, ordering it to be privatized as soon as possible. The chairman of the recipient organization disregarded her instructions. She issued the order again, and again it was ignored. Her third letter informed the chairman that he was being sacked. I used this example in a cabinet meeting to make it clear that whoever resisted the PM's efforts would meet a fate

similar to that of the chairman. There was no privatization whilst Khawaja Muhammad Asif was the Chairman of the Privatization Commission from March 1997 to 12 October 1999. The PM continued to accept excuses for the ineffectiveness of the privatization commission.

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In a meeting of the Economic Committee of the Cabinet, about ten projects came up for approval of overruns which amounted to more than Rs25 billion. They were approved in a matter of a few minutes. I raised the objection that if funds are not available, we should only undertake projects which could have assured funding on a yearly basis. An example is the Khanpur Dam in Haripur district. It was to be completed at a cost of Rs64 million. It was started in 1964 and was completed in 1985 at a cost of Rs1.45 billion.

The Quaid-i-Azam International Airport in Karachi was constructed by a French company. They claimed to have done additional work, for which they demanded approximately \$7 million. The Civil Aviation Authority got a stay order on this demand, so the French company went to a court in Singapore and obtained a decree for \$90 million. The French government had guaranteed this project so they had to pay \$75 million to the French company. The French President refused to visit Pakistan till this issue was resolved. Pakistan finally had to take a fresh loan from France after the ouster of the Nawaz Sharif government to repay the amount. Again, no one was held responsible.

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President Suleman Demirel of Turkey, who came on a visit to Pakistan in early 1998, was flown over the Indus River to show him the Karakoram mountains. *En route* he asked one of his ministers to look out of the window and tell him what he could

see. The minister replied: 'I see vast barren mountains.' The President asked him to have a better look, but the minister only gave him the same answer. The President looked out and said, 'Look at the river Indus, it is untapped power for Pakistan.'

The Indus River upstream from Tarbela has nearly seven locations on which dams to store water and produce electricity can be built. The one on which work could start at the earliest is the Bhasha Dam. Keeping this in mind, I took a helicopter and went to look at the site for the Bhasha, which would store upto 7.2 millions acre feet of water and produce 3600 megawatts of electricity.

The location at which the Bhasha was to be built was an excellent one. The right bank of the dam would be in the Northern Areas, and the left bank near Bhasha, possibly in Kohistan. The people and administration of the Northern Areas quote a letter written in 1937 claiming that the village of Bhasha was in the Northern Areas and not in Kohistan (Hazara). If Bhasha village was in Kohistan, then only 2,000 acres of cliff and mountains of Kohistan would be affected. To resolve this issue, a commission was constituted to demarcate the boundary between the Northern Areas and Kohistan. I met two representative *jirgas* at Chilas, and the people insisted that the name be changed from Bhasha to Diamer. It became obvious that WAPDA would have to be more people-friendly and not treat the people as they had for the Mangla and Tarbela dams. The following decisions were made upon my return to Islamabad, in the presence of the administration of the Northern Areas:

- The name of the dam would be changed from Bhasha to Diamer;
- Land for the project would be acquired at market rates;
- Local labour would be employed and when not available, would be trained in other WAPDA or government organizations. Only when local labour was not available, could labour from outside the Northern Areas be employed;

- Government land called Khalsa would be developed, irrigated from streams or from water lifted from the river. These lands would be given to the people whose irrigated land would come under water in the Northern Areas;
- The displaced people would be settled in colonies replete with all necessary facilities such as schools, hospitals, colleges, etc. These would remain with WAPDA for maintenance and further development;
- As the power station could be built on either side of the river, preference would be given to install the turbines on the right bank and left bank. (The initial study also recommended this).
- Giving part of the net profit from the project to the Northern Areas would be given consideration.

The site for the Bhasha Dam was in a seismic zone, but with modern technology the problems that were posed could be overcome. The Karakoram road would have to be raised for a stretch of 125 kilometres. The airfield of Chilas would have to be submerged. Nearly 21,000 people would be displaced. The dam could be ready in nine years; two and a half years for detailed feasibility, and six for construction. Getting funds for the project would not be a problem.

Nawaz Sharif (and later President Musharraf also), was more interested in Kalabagh Dam, but WAPDA should also have started work on the Diamer Dam which could have been completed by 2010. A few years later, I asked the Ministry of Water and Power to give me a copy of the decisions I had taken regarding the Diamer Dam. I was informed that all the papers from that period had been destroyed due to a fire

I had been advocating the construction of the Diamer Dam since 1985 because Kalabagh has been so politicized. I told Prime Minister Mohammed Khan Junejo to start work on it but he was removed from power before he could begin. If the project had

been started then, we may have been in the position today to build another dam upstream from Tarbela.

Similarly, the Bunji power project in the Northern Areas would not have displaced a single person. It would be built on a location at which the Indus takes a horse-shoe loop of 26 kilometres. It would be a run-of-the river project. It would require a tunnel of 8 kilometres to connect the loop and produce 1,500 MW of power. This project would have been complete by 2010 had it been undertaken. The Hangol and Mirani dams in Balochistan were feasible for storage of water for irrigation. Even Abu Dhabi was interested in importing drinking water from the Hangol dam. The water could be taken there by a pipeline for which an agreement was signed by me in Abu Dhabi.

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The grid systems of Europe are interconnected. If, for example, Spain wants power it can buy it straight away from any country. A Turkish company had come to see me to discuss the possibility of carrying out a feasibility report for the connection of the grid systems of the Economic Co-operation Organization countries. The Turkish company would bear the cost. I signed the agreement on behalf of Pakistan. Soon afterwards, Nawaz Sharif's government was ousted. I do not think any progress was made on the project, apart from the initial feasibility.

An Indian delegation had also come to Pakistan to explore the possibility of buying electricity from us. We agreed on the locations at which the grid stations would be built. The meeting at which we were to fix the per-unit price did not succeed, as the Indians believed we had surplus power which we would not be able to use. Even if we had settled on a profitable rate, the Chairman of WAPDA would have remained unenthusiastic about the deal because he felt that India was an enemy and we should not provide any comfort to them. The lack of a balanced approach amongst our top officials is a major problem in this



country. One day they dub India an enemy, and the next day they want India to agree to a gas pipeline from our country to theirs and guarantee its protection.

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While General Pervez Musharraf was on tour in the US, (after taking over as the Army Chief in 1998), a company gave him a study they had conducted about the possibility of raising the height of the Mangla dam. The report from the study was passed on to the Prime Minister, then to the Finance Minister, and it eventually reached the Ministry of Water and Power. When the proposal was sent to WAPDA, their first reaction was that the matter required further study as the sandstone rock on which the dam was built might not take the additional weight of earth and rock. They also argued that, with the exception of 1992 when there were heavy floods, the dam, with its existing height, did not get filled. Luckily, all fears were addressed and misgivings removed, and the project was undertaken. This will create additional storage capacity for the Mangla dam and also generate more power.

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On 1 June 1999, I accompanied Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to Chitral, where he was to attend a public meeting. I wanted to be there in case any hydroelectric project came under discussion. Mr Langland, the principal of a private school in Chitral, approached the PM with a request for a grant of Rs10 million for the school. The PM agreed to his request straight away. I told Mr Langland to go immediately to Islamabad and have the money released there, otherwise the matter would be left hanging for years.

The public meeting of Chitral was well attended. Numerous demands were made in connection with development work for

the area, including the construction of the Lowari tunnel. In the end, the PM announced a package of 'one arab rupees' [Rs1 billion] for Chitral. There was hardly any applause from the people. The PM told them that it was not an Arab from Saudi Arabia but an 'arab', a hundred crore rupees. Cheering and applause filled the air. The PM then asked the gathering if they wanted a better polo ground. (The meeting was being held in a polo ground). The crowd shouted back saying that they wanted a cricket ground. Just shows how cricket has caught on even in the mountainous areas!

The PM pledged large amounts of money at the rally, but the release of funds was certainly going to take time because money was short. In any case, this amount would have to be put into the budget of 1999-2000 before it was released. However, the government changed on 12 October 1999. I doubt if this money was ever released.

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On 10 August 1999, I met Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to discuss matters of concern to the Ministry of Water and Power. At the end of the meeting, I looked him straight in the eye and told him, 'People say that you were not informed of the Kargil operation till it was launched.' He said he had been informed; he had been briefed twice, in fact. (Whether he fully understood the briefing or not is another matter). I also told the PM that my assessment of the prevailing situation was that he would soon be taken prisoner and that our days in government were numbered. His reply was nonchalant. '*Allah Maalik Hai*,' he said.

At a meeting with the PM on 18 September, I again told him that the removal of his government was imminent. 'There is every possibility that you will be arrested by the very guards who are standing outside for your protection today. It may be similar to 18 April 1993, when I came to see you after midnight about filing the petition against your removal.'

As I was getting up to leave, Nawaz Sharif said, 'In that meeting we had before you went to London, I wanted to say something to you that I decided to leave till you had returned.'

'So, what is it?' I asked.

'I do not believe it, nor did I believe it when President Farooq Ahmad Leghari told me about it. When there was a crisis in November 1997, he told me that my ministers were not with me and when I had asked him who those ministers were, he took your name. He went on to say that you wanted him to disqualify both me and Benazir on corruption charges. But I did not believe him then,' he reiterated. 'Nor do I believe him now.'

'Whether you believed him or not is a separate matter, but for you to have kept this issue on your mind for twenty-one months and have continued to keep me as Foreign Minister and Minister for Water and Power baffles me. For you to bring this issue up today also gives me an indication about your thinking. I suggest we go straight to Farooq Khan Leghari and confront him with what you have said. I insist.'

'No, no, I did not believe it then and certainly do not believe it now,' said Nawaz Sharif.

'But you raised the issue and I have to get it cleared. And I will certainly do this. I will ask Farooq Khan Leghari wherever I meet him.'

I met Leghari at a wedding some time later and confronted him on the matter. He flatly denied ever having said anything of the sort. By this time Nawaz Sharif was in detention so I could not convey to him Farooq Khan Leghari's reply.

# 25

## THE KARGIL CONFLICT

THE POSTS OF the Pakistan Army in the Kargil sector of Kashmir were attacked and taken by the Indian Army in the 1965 war. The Indians vacated the posts after the Tashkent Agreement, only to occupy them again in the 1971 war. This time India did not vacate these posts even after the Simla Accord was signed. During the winters, however, these posts would remain unoccupied due to very heavy snowfall.

General Pervez Musharraf, on assuming command of the army, wanted to dispel the perception that India had been successful in various minor operations since 1971, particularly with reference to Siachen. The Kargil operation was planned as a limited operation with the purpose of establishing the Pakistan Army's prowess and humbling the Indians. The operation was also designed to block the Srinagar-Leh road, which would make it difficult for the Indians to get their supplies to Drass, Kargil, Leh and Siachen. The idea was that this would force the Indians to negotiate and stop firing on the Neelum valley road, which was making life difficult for the civilian population and to some extent for the Pakistan Army as well. The operation was also meant to draw the world's attention to the Kashmir issue.

The Indians were probing gaps along the line of control (LOC) in the Turtok and Kaksar sectors. Pakistan noticed these probes and responded by putting in more troops. A clash took place in which one Indian soldier was killed in the Turtok sector and five in the Kaksar. As Pakistan did not man this area on a permanent basis, the Indians wanted to move in and establish posts there.

The Indians also wanted to clear Pakistani posts in the Shagma sector which could interdict traffic on the Srinagar-Leh road.

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Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was briefed on the Kargil operation before it was launched. Apart from General Pervez Musharraf and his team, those who were present at the briefing were the PM and ministers Lieutenant General (retd) Abdul Majid Malik, Sartaj Aziz, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Raja Zafar-ul-Haq and Defence Secretary Lieutenant General (retd) Iftikhar Ali Khan. What details were revealed at this briefing is not known. The second briefing was held in the ISI headquarters. Very few senior army officers were kept in the loop, in order to maintain secrecy. Even the naval and air force chiefs were not included.

General Pervez Musharraf's confidence with regards to the Kargil operation stemmed from, in my view, his assessment that the conditions were such that Pakistan would have an advantage over the Indians in the event of a war escalating on the international border, and if India broadened the conflict, Pakistan would have the upper hand. General Musharraf believed this was an opportunity that would not present itself again in the near future. The General's conjecture was probably based on the following:

- A majority of the Indian Army was engaged in occupied Kashmir and in the eastern regions of India to quell the separatist movements that had arisen there.
- The morale of the Indian Army was low.
- The Indian armed forces had a serious shortages of spare parts for tanks and fighter aircraft, so a large number of them would be non-operational for some time.

- The Indian aircraft carrier *Viraat* was undergoing a re-fit in the dry docks, and would not be able to leave port immediately.

The Northern Light Infantry and regular units stationed in the Northern Areas were used in the Kargil operation so that there would be no noticeable troop movements in the plains. The troops moved into their posts with ammunition and rations along with communication equipment, unnoticed by the Indians. The Northern Light Infantry and regular army units did extremely well, as did the artillery units that dismantled some of the field guns and lifted them by helicopter to position them for a better range over the Kargil town and the Srinagar-Leh road. Lighter guns were also helicopter-lifted into their positions. Food and ammunition were stocked in empty posts and porters were employed to re-supply them. All this was done without firing a shot, and the Indian intelligence agencies failed to detect these advances. On 9 May 1999, accurate shelling totally destroyed India's Kargil ammunition dump, which had been dug deep. Secondary explosions continued for two days.

Pakistan continued to claim that it was the Mujahideen who were in these positions. The Mujahideen were in fact attacking the Indian security forces in occupied Kashmir. Hence, to the outside world it appeared an extension of the Mujahideen operations which were intended to draw the world's attention to the issue and negotiate a ceasefire and talks to settle the Kashmir dispute. The Indians were totally confused as to whether these were Kashmiri Mujahideen, Afghans, NWFP tribesmen or a mixture of the three. It was only after some soldiers of the Northern Light Infantry were killed in a clash and a few captured, that the Indians came to know of the composition of the forces and their intentions.

The move forward by Pakistan was detected by two local shepherds, Tashi Namagyal and Tsering Morup, who were both informers of the Indian intelligence agencies. In fact a large

number of shepherds in the area were informants, and the Indians relied on them to provide them with valuable information regarding troop movements in those remote mountainous regions where it was very difficult to have a comprehensive surveillance system. In this case, the two shepherds' reports were first casually dismissed, and the Indians sent a patrol to verify their claims.

Up until mid-May 1999, the Indians were not aware of the extent of infiltration. The Indian Army Chief, General V.P. Malik, went off on a visit to the Czech Republic. The Indian Defence Minister visited Kargil on 13 May 1999 and declared that they would have everything under control in 48 hours.

On 21 May, a photo reconnaissance Canberra bomber was flown from its base in Agra to photograph the areas of Drass, Kargil and Batalik. While the bomber was flying over the Batalik sector, it was hit by a ground-to-air shoulder-fired missile, setting one of its engines on fire. The aircraft limped to the Srinagar airbase. Despite this event, the Indian Army Chief did not cut short his foreign visit. On his return, however, he went straight to Srinagar on 23 May and launched Operation Vijay. The Indian Air Force launched Operation Safed Sagar.

The Indians closed off the Srinagar airport for military use. Four squadrons (totaling nearly 48) of top of the line fighter aircraft—Mirage 2000, Jaguars, MIG-21 and MIG-27—were brought to Srinagar and three other forward bases. On 27 May 1999, a MIG-21 and a MIG-27 were brought down by shoulder-fired missiles. Squadron Leader Ajay Ahuja, who was flying the MIG-27, had to eject from the aircraft and landed in Pakistan-controlled territory. He was found dead. The Indians claim that he was fired upon while he was parachuting down, or when he was on the ground. If this was so, Squadron Leader Ahuja's body would have been riddled with bullets, which it was not. Only one bullet was recovered from his body, and an examination of the bullet would have proved whose bullet it was.

On 28 May, four MI-17 helicopters fitted with rocket launchers were sent on a mission to attack the positions of the Pakistani troops. One of these helicopters was brought down by a shoulder-fired ground to air missile, and its crew of four was killed in the crash. The other three helicopters escaped and were not used again. A few days later, the Indians sent three Cheetah helicopters. They were peppered by machine gun fire but they too managed to escape. During this period the Srinagar-Leh road had remained closed due to the artillery we were firing from our positions in the hills. The Indians then realized that if this situation persisted, their supplies to Leh and Siachen would be severed completely.

The masterminds of the Kargil operation believed that the Indians would not be able to bear the closure of the Srinagar-Leh road for long. The road was coming under blistering attack from the Pakistanis, and the expectation was that India would be forced to stop interdicting the Neelum Valley road in return for our withdrawal from the Srinagar-Leh road, and talks would begin about the settlement of the Kashmir dispute.

\* \* \* \*

The Kargil conflict came up for discussion before the cabinet on 3 June 1999. The PM opened the discussion by bringing out a letter he had received from President Clinton asking for the withdrawal of Mujahideen forces from Kargil and Drass sectors and from the posts they had occupied. Straight away Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources, asked who had ordered the Kargil operation. The PM did not answer him. After fiddling nervously with the letter that was in his hand, he decided to read the body of Clinton's letter aloud. After he was done reading out the letter, the Foreign Secretary, Mr Shamshad Ahmad, said that we should actively explain to the international community that it was the Mujahideen who were fighting for freedom from the Indians.



The DG ISI, Lieutenant General Khawaja Ziauddin, was next to speak. He described the situation on the ground. The information given by him was even less detailed than what was appearing in the press and on television. The DG ISI stated that we could withdraw from Kargil without difficulty, as the Indians were not fully aware of the positions being held by our troops. He also mentioned that the troops stationed there were mostly from the Northern Light Infantry and some regular troops were also present, supported by mortars and artillery. Publicly, the government was saying that it was the Mujahideen who had crossed over, and that they had nothing to do with the infiltration, so therefore they could not control it. The Secretary Defence, Lieutenant General (retd) Iftikhar Ali Khan, then started to brief us on the military situation. He provided details on the reserve positions of our tank and artillery ammunition, and stated that reserves were very low. It was obvious that the Secretary Foreign Affairs and Secretary Defence were not in the loop and had possibly been brought in during the past thirty days. The Secretary Defence seemed to be opposed to the operation. Sheikh Rashid Ahmad asked the PM not to disclose further details of ammunition levels, as the information could be leaked to India.

The Kargil conflict was then opened for discussion by the cabinet in the light of President Clinton's letter. Nobody gave more than a very brief comment. The PM was not forthcoming with his views either. None of the ministers suggested a withdrawal since no one was fully aware of the situation. It was a directionless meeting. However, I made the following points:

- We will not be able to convince the world that it was the Mujahideen who had captured the Kargil posts. Mujahideen do not hold ground and fight against artillery and air bombardment, simply because they do not have the resources to do so.

- The Indian Army will try to re-take the posts in a few days when some of the snow around the posts has melted.
- Troops all over try to improve their positions in a limited manner if an opportunity presents itself. (The Secretary Defence interjected here and said that that was a very dangerous suggestion and should not be expressed).

The Secretary Defence and the DG ISI gave the impression that they favoured a withdrawal and wanted to avoid an armed conflict with India. The meeting ended without a decision on how to respond to President Clinton's letter. Had PM Nawaz Sharif not been in the loop beforehand, he would have pushed for withdrawal using the cabinet's approval and President Clinton's letter as the basis for his decision. During the next two days three brigadiers from the Directorate of Military Operations separately briefed the senators and members of the National Assembly in Committee Room No. 2 of the Parliament. The briefing was in far greater detail than given to the Cabinet, with maps and locations of posts indicated. I just walked in to hear the briefing being given to the National Assembly members. The officers were upbeat due to the downing of Indian MIG-21, MIG-27, a helicopter, and damage to one engine of a Canberra reconnaissance bomber and a number of helicopters. Indian attacks on a number of posts were beaten back with casualties to them. There had been no casualties on our side. They were confident that the Srinagar-Leh road would remain closed for a very long time; further that the Indians would be short of supplies in Siachen; that they would have to use a jeep track from Himachal Pradesh which would have to be widened to carry trucks over very long distances. They gave the impression of a possible withdrawal of the Indian army from Siachen, and also the negotiation of the opening and no interdiction of the Neelum Valley road which had been closed for over three years, in return that there be no interdiction on the Srinagar-Leh road by Pakistan.

General Anthony Zinni, Commander Central Command came to Pakistan and held meetings with General Pervez Musharaf and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on 24-25 June. He told them that if they didn't pull back they were going to bring war and nuclear annihilation on their country. This made clear what the American position would be in the event that there was no withdrawal.

\* \* \* \*

The Indian commanders at the brigadier and general levels were hopelessly ignorant of the situation. They pressed their battalion commanders (who were much older than their counterparts in the Pakistan Army) to be aggressive. The battalion commanders sent their young officers to uncharted areas which had not been reconnoitered either for the route to be taken or to gauge the strength of the opposing force. Their cooking arrangements were the same as though they were in the barracks, and sometimes it took an entire day for cooked food to get to the forward troops. Indian brigades were moved into the area from the valley and lower areas, and they arrived ill-prepared for the cold. They were short of equipment, boots, and clothing, and they were not familiar with the terrain. The junior Indian officers who would come up the steep slopes to press their attacks were praised by Pakistani officers for their bravery and determination. These young officers had to suffer heavy casualties, and their morale was low.

On the Pakistani front, the Northern Light Infantry and the regular troops that occupied positions in the Ladakh-Drass sectors were also living in cramped, cold conditions and had to face severe challenges just to survive. Even the Indian officers quoted the bravery of these men. (Captain Karnal Sher Khan *Shaheed* in particular was praised by the Indians).

Some posts held by the Pakistanis fell to determined attacks from the Indians. The attacking troops were initially at a great disadvantage; they could be seen coming up the slope, they were out of breath due to lack of oxygen, and unsure of the defenders' positions. However, the Indian Air Force pounded the Pakistani posts from the air with laser-guided bombs and concentrated artillery barrages. Very few posts occupied by Pakistani troops were located in such a way as to provide cover to each other by rifle or machine gun fire. In a majority of cases if a post fell or troops were withdrawn, there was nothing in depth or on the flanks to allow a counter attack to be launched because of the terrain at these heights which restricted troops from being deployed for such eventualities.

Given the heavy air strikes and concentrated artillery fire from the Indians, re-supply to Pakistani posts became difficult. There was no vehicle access, and all supplies had to be carried by porters or helicopters. Many porters could not reach the posts with their load, especially during heavy artillery and air strikes.

By the end of the Kargil operation India had inducted a strength of approximately 4 divisions along with 24 regiments of field and medium artillery (approximately 300 guns, heavy mortars and multi-barrel rocket launchers. The Indian Air Force carried out 1260 air strikes, and helicopters in various roles carried out 2300 sorties. The pounding taken bravely by Pakistani troop should be written in golden letters for their valour. Troops of any other country would have surrendered or abandoned their positions after passing a message that they were untenable.

\* \* \* \*

In the next cabinet meeting, Kargil was not on the agenda. After the meeting concluded, I heard the PM say that he had been told that the Indians would not be able to occupy our posts, but we were losing quite a few posts everyday. An end to the operation

was inevitable and imminent. The countdown to ceasefire had begun.

On 12 June the Prime Minister spoke to Mr Vajpayee on the telephone to start negotiations. Vajpayee demanded withdrawal of Pakistani troops to the LOC before any talks could be held.

On 14 June 1999, the US State Department declared the situation in Kargil serious. Pro-Indian Congressmen wanted Pakistan to be declared a terrorist state.

On 15 June 1999, a Pakistani ammunition dump was partially destroyed by an Indian MIG-27. Some officers and *jawans* embraced *shahadat*.

On 16 June 1999, the Indian Navy redeployed its eastern fleet to the Arabian Sea. The G8 also called on India and Pakistan to hold talks. Any further military action to change the status quo was deemed irresponsible. India was clearly winning the propaganda and public relations war.

On 23 June 1999, the US State Department cautioned that things could 'get bad' for Pakistan. General Anthony Zinni, Commander CENTCOM again extended a warning to Pakistan to withdraw from Kargil.

On 25 June 1999, General Pervez Musharraf hinted at ongoing efforts to arrange a meeting between the PM and President Clinton as reported by the Press.

On 3 July 1999, Tiger Hill—the most dominant feature on the Drass–Kargil stretch of the Srinagar–Leh road, which had been in Pakistani hands till then—was attacked and captured by the Indians on the early morning of 4 July 1999.

On 4 July 1999, President Clinton and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met in Washington and agreed to a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Pakistani elements to their original LOC positions. President Clinton was also on the telephone with Mr Vajpayee. Numerous drafts were exchanged in Washington both for language and content and after an exhausting day, an agreement was signed. The PM was to land at Lahore but came to Islamabad for fear of a public backlash.

On 9 July 1999, the defence committee of the cabinet approved the ceasefire—also known as the Washington Accord.

\* \* \* \*

Before the ceasefire came into effect, the Indians had retaken about 15 per cent of the posts out of approximately 136 held by Pakistan. On 26 July 1999, after the withdrawal by Pakistani troops, India was in occupation of all the posts previously occupied by Pakistan. They increased their military presence close to four division strength in the Batalik, Drass and Kargil sectors.

The Pakistan Army and Northern Light Infantry suffered casualties amounting to approximately 450 men. Twenty-five local shepherds living in the area were killed and 55 wounded by artillery fire. The total casualties that the Indians suffered were 564 killed and 1,370 injured. The Indians spent over Rs3,000 crores—some put the figure at 4,000 crores—on the Kargil operation. They were spending approximately Rs25 crores a day to maintain troops at those heights.

The officers and *jawans* of the Northern Light Infantry and regular army personnel were given gallantry awards on 14 August 1999 by the President of Pakistan. Captain Karnal Sher Khan of the Sindh Regiment and Havaldar Lalak Jan of the Northern Light Infantry received the *Nishan-e-Haider* posthumously. I had gone to Chaklala airbase where Captain Karnal Sher Khan's body was brought from Delhi. The *Namaz-e-Janaza* was offered at Chaklala. India was showing their dead being cremated or buried but we hardly showed any of the funerals of our *shaheeds*.

Tactically the Kargil operation was a success. Strategically, it fell far short of achieving its objective. The Indians postponed the foreign secretaries' talks on the composite dialogue, and there was no talk of settlement of the dispute, as had been hoped.

It was obvious from the cabinet meeting of 3 June 1999, that the PM did not have his heart in this operation. Why he did not express himself during the briefings is a mystery. Perhaps he was hoping against hope that the operation would be successful and Pakistan would hold on to the posts, in which case he would have taken full credit for the operation—as he did for the nuclear tests.

## **The Aftermath of Kargil**

After the Kargil episode, various politicians and analysts were disseminating the view that the economy was a shambles and law and order out of control. What was needed, in their opinion, was a government of technocrats who could set the economy straight in two years. They were confident that the Supreme Court would go along with the dissolution of assemblies if the matter went to court. While I was in London in August 1999, an important person who had strong links and contacts both in Pakistan and the World Bank, came to see me and strongly proposed a two-year government of technocrats. He was of the view that both Nawaz Sharif and Benazir had been disastrous and should be kept out of power. I heard the person without comment.

During the very last cabinet meeting of the PML government in late September 1999, it seemed very clear to me that we were going through a Greek tragedy, the end of which was known in advance. During one of the breaks, I went and sat next to Raja Zafar-ul-Haq and told him that I had informed the PM that he would be arrested by the very guards who were standing outside saluting us that day. 'No,' said Raja Zafar-ul-Haq. 'We will be in power for another five years after the elections.'

In the first week of October 1999, there were clear indications that the PM was waiting for an opportunity to remove the Army Chief. It was also obvious that the time for the PM to act against the Army Chief had long passed; after rewarding army officers

and soldiers for their gallantry in Kargil and officially declaring the Kargil operation a great success, he had no grounds whatsoever on which to remove the Army Chief.

Upon my return from London in late September 1999, I said in a cabinet meeting that there were reports from Pakistani bankers based in London that large sums of money were being transferred from Pakistan to Dubai, Singapore and Hong Kong. The Pakistanis settled in the UK did not trust the government as it had frozen their foreign exchange in Pakistan. Names of important personalities were among those who had supposedly transferred funds abroad. The economy was in complete disarray. Something had to be done urgently. The PM put together a committee of ministers, with the Finance Minister as Chairman and me as a member. The committee met, but the finance ministry and State Bank representatives appeared helpless. It seemed it was beyond the competence of the people at the helm of the finance ministry.

On 19 September, the Opposition parties that had been trying to gather their forces for some time finally launched the Grand Alliance Movement against the government. An advertisement appeared in the *New York Times* accusing the Pakistan Army of being a 'rogue army'. The army suspected that whoever was behind the publication had the PM's blessings.

General Pervez Musharraf left for Colombo on 10 October to attend the golden jubilee celebrations of the Sri Lankan army. I anticipated that the army takeover was imminent.

\* \* \* \*

My secretary, Shahid Hussain, and Saeed Mehdi, the principal secretary to the PM, were good friends. On a number of occasions, Shahid Hussain and I had discussed the political situation. I told him to tell Saeed Mehdi to be careful, as whenever there is a change in government the principal secretary also becomes a target along with the PM.



On the morning of 12 October 1999, my secretary came to me to discuss issues of the ministry. I asked him if he had told Saeed Mehdi to be careful. 'No, I did not have the heart,' he replied. I presented him a tie and said I hoped we would meet under better circumstances. I, for my part, had cleared all my personal papers from my desk and office three days earlier. I then left the office to attend a meeting in the finance ministry.

In the afternoon, I went to the Military Hospital in Rawalpindi, where my grandson was born at 4.30 p.m. He was Omar Ayub Khan's child. We were in the process of distributing sweets to the patients in the neighbouring wards when we received news that General Musharraf had been removed and General Khawaja Ziauddin Butt had been appointed Chief of Army Staff by the PM. I knew instantly that things would not stay that way for long, as General Ziauddin had no troops under command to establish himself as Army Chief.

Soon enough, the inevitable happened. By evening, troops were taking up their positions. General Ziauddin was not accepted as Chief of Army Staff. The PM was taken into custody, as was General Ziauddin.

My secretary, Shahid Hussain called me up later that night, asking after me. Then he asked: 'Sir, was someone listening to our conversation in the office this morning?'

'I don't know—why do you ask?' I replied.

'Sir, because everything went exactly as you had predicted!' Despite everything, I had to smile.

# GLOSSARY

124A	Penal code applied to those charged with armed revolt against the state.
42 DPR	Section 42 of Defence of Pakistan Rules.
<i>aabdar</i>	Waiter/servant serving water or drinks.
Adamjee	Referring to the late Mr Ghulam Muhammad Adamjee Fecto, Chairman of FECTO Cement, Islamabad. Not related to the Adamjee Group.
Aiwan-e-Sadar	President's House.
Al-Khalid Tank	Named after Muslim General Khalid Bin Walid, who defeated the Roman army at the Battle of Yarmuk.
<i>amanat</i>	An item kept in safe custody with a reliable person.
<i>arab</i>	One billion.
<i>bela</i>	Sandbank in a river.
<i>billa</i>	A person with light, cat-like eyes. Also, a tomcat.
Blue Patrol	Black jacket and trousers worn on ceremonial functions during winter.
BRB Canal	Bambanwala-Ravi-Bedian Canal
Bren gun	A magazine-fed light machine gun.
<i>bund</i>	Earth embankment along a river or canal and also built for positioning troops as a defensive obstacle.
Charger	Officers and men's horse used in peace or war.
Chief/C-in-C	Commander-in-Chief of the Army.
crore	Ten million.
Depth Charge	A drum-like ammunition dropped from warships by adjusting the depth at which they burst to destroy submarines.

Depth	Term used in the army referring to the deployment of troops further back from the front line of troops of a unit or formation.
Dine out	A farewell dinner given in an Officer's Mess.
Doon School	A prestigious school in Dehra Dun, India.
<i>dungar</i>	Punjabi word for cattle.
<i>dupatta</i>	A very large rectangular scarf.
<i>fateha</i>	Prayer for the departed person.
<i>gardawar</i>	Official of the land revenue department. One in each district having several <i>patwaris</i> working under him.
Ghauri missile	Named after the Afghan King, Mohammad Ghauri, who defeated Prithviraj Chauhan in 1192.
Hawaladar	Sergeant.
<i>hujra</i>	A meeting place set aside by the local Khan of the village. Guests can also be put up in it overnight.
<i>hukka</i>	Hubble-bubble pipe.
<i>janam patri</i>	A birth chart usually drawn up by an astrologer covering the entire life of a person. Mostly done by the Hindus. Not an Islamic practice.
Jawan	Term for all soldiers in the army (not non-commissioned, junior commissioned and officers).
lac	Hundred thousand.
Le Gourmet	Restaurant and nightclub of the Palace Hotel, Karachi. The Sheraton Hotel now stands on its site.
<i>mafi nama</i>	Letter requesting forgiveness.
<i>makkai-ki-roti</i>	Bread made from maize flour.
<i>malang</i>	A holy man of the Islamic faith (not to be confused with a mullah/maulvi).
<i>mazedar</i>	Tasty, delicious. Also, a thing that affords pleasure or amusement; anything strange or funny; a jest, joke, pleasantry.
<i>mela</i>	A fair.

<b>Patiala State Forces</b>	An army paid and maintained by the princely state of Patiala with the Maharaja as its Commander-in-Chief.
<i>pattay</i>	Hair allowed to grow long an inch below the ear lobe and evenly cut from the back. The men of the Khattak, Masood, and Wazir tribes still wear their hair in this fashion.
<i>patwari</i>	Junior revenue official dealing with land revenue collection and maintenance of land record.
<b>pillbox</b>	A small, enclosed, fortified gun emplacement, normally constructed with reinforced concrete.
<b>Pir</b>	A saint or spiritual guide.
<b>Position untenable</b>	A defensive position held by troops which cannot be held any longer in face of enemy action.
<b>Post</b>	Troops manning bunker or sangar.
<i>Quaid</i>	Leader. Referring to Mohammad Ali Jinnah.
<b>Reserve liability</b>	Defence Forces personnel who have to come for training every year and are called-up for service during outbreak of war.
<b>Reserves</b>	Reserves of oil, petrol, ammunition to fight for a number of days.
<b>Risaldar Major</b>	The most senior rank of a junior commissioned cavalry officer, equivalent to a Subedar Major in the infantry. A rank used both in the Pakistan and Indian armies.
<b>Risaldar</b>	A rank of junior commissioned officer in the cavalry and now a rank held in the armoured corps.
<i>Roti, kapra, aur makan</i>	Food, clothing, and housing.
<i>Sadar</i>	President.
<b>Sangar</b>	A term for a breastwork of earth, stone or concrete; rifle pit for several men. Often used for a small Pillbox. Also, a small defensive position made with rough stones with no overhead cover.

<i>Sardars</i>	All non-commissioned Indian or Pakistani officers like Naib Subedar, Subedar, Subedar Major, Risaldar Major.
Section 144	Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code, Pakistan bans four or more people from gathering at public places, carrying firearms in public places, use of loudspeakers, tinted windows on vehicles, wall chalking and graffiti.
<i>shaheed</i>	A martyr.
<i>shaheen</i>	A hawk or falcon.
Sher-Dil	Lion heart.
<i>shikara</i>	Light skiff used for quick transport over the waterways in Kashmir.
<i>sowar</i>	Pakistan Army cavalry jawan, equivalent to Trooper.
Subedar Major	Pakistan Army infantry junior commissioned officer, the most senior Subedar in a Regiment. The most senior rank of junior commissioned infantry officer, equivalent to a Risaldar Major in the cavalry (now armoured corps).
Subedar	Pakistan Army infantry junior commissioned officer.
<i>tehmad</i>	A long sheet of cloth worn like a sarong, mostly in the Punjab, by men.
Territorial Battalion	Something like the state militia or national guard of the USA recruited from a local area to do part time soldiering.
<i>tilawat</i>	Recitation of a short verse from the Quran—e.g. at the commencement of a function.
Train March	Political workers and leaders travelling by train from station to station in a show of strength.
<i>Ulema</i>	A body of Muslim scholars of sacred law and theology.
<i>valima</i>	A reception traditionally held the day after the wedding but often held up to a week later if

	logistically necessary. It is hosted by the groom's parents.
<i>wazifa</i>	A short prayer for the accomplishment of a certain aim; a stipend.
<b>Web Belt</b>	Commonly a military type belt made of tight-webbed material. Used to be cotton, now could be synthetic.
<i>yar</i>	Friend.
<i>zamindar</i>	Landlord in the Punjab. An agriculturist in the NWFP.
<i>ziarat</i>	To visit; pilgrimage to a holy site.

### Acronyms

AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir.
APHC	All Parties Hurriyat Conference.
AX	Grades given in courses attended in army institutions. 'A' is the highest grade in knowledge of the subject taken. 'X' is the highest grade in instructional capability to be instructor.
CMH	Combined Military Hospital.
CO	Commanding Officer.
DG	Director General.
DSO	Distinguished Service Order.
DSP	Deputy Superintendent of Police.
FIR	First Information Report, lodged against a person in a police station for committing some crime.
INA	Indian National Army.
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence.
JCO	Junior Commissioned Officer.
Jl	Jamaat-i-Islami.
LOC	Line of Control.
MC	Military Cross.
OBE	Order of the British Empire.
OIC	Organization of Islamic Countries.

PC	Pearl Continental Hotel.
PECHS	Pakistan Employees Housing Society.
PIMS	Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences.
PMA	Pakistan Military Academy.
PNA	Pakistan National Alliance.
PPP	Pakistan People's Party.
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.
SITE	Sindh Industrial Trading Estate. Designated as an Industrial Area in 1963, SITE is the oldest and the largest designated Industrial Area of Pakistan.
WAPDA	Water and Power Development Authority.

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# GLIMPSES INTO THE CORRIDORS OF POWER

GOHAR AYUB KHAN

This book offers an insider's view of people and events that directly affected the course of Pakistan's political history. The author gradually widens the scope of his recollections from his boyhood and school days as a child in a peripatetic military family, to events of Partition, his cadetship at Sandhurst, and the huge affairs of state he experienced as the son of Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan, former Commander-in-Chief and President and Pakistan's first military ruler, as also in his capacity as Ayub Khan's ADC, and eventually as a politician in his own right.

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